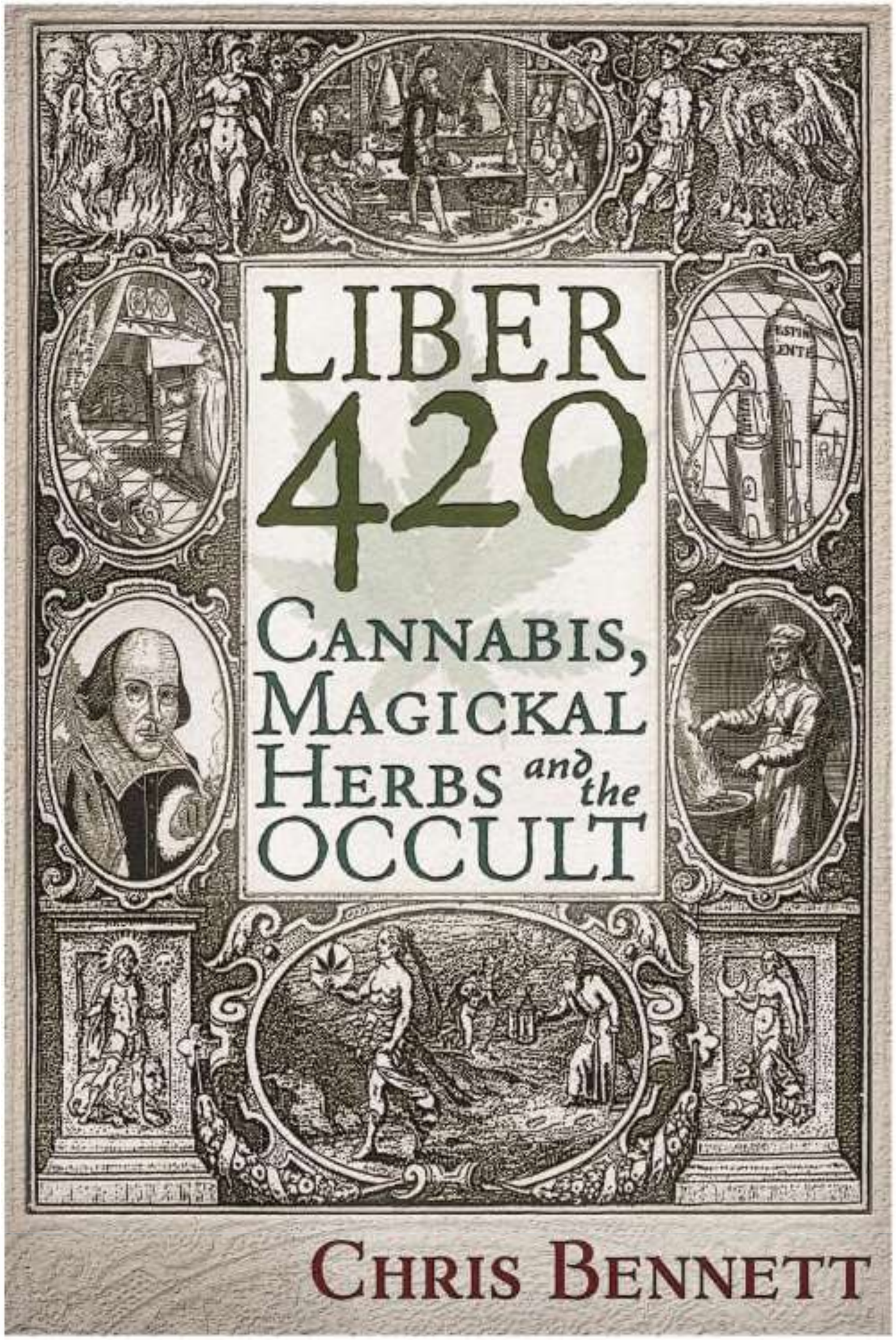
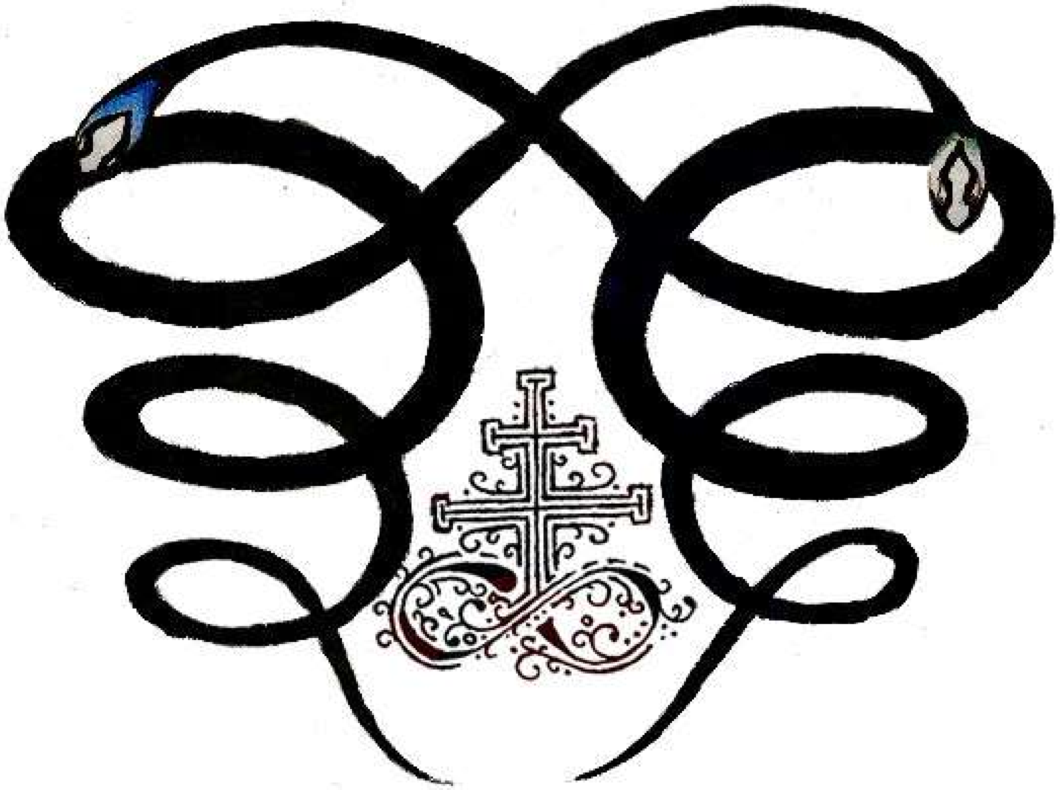
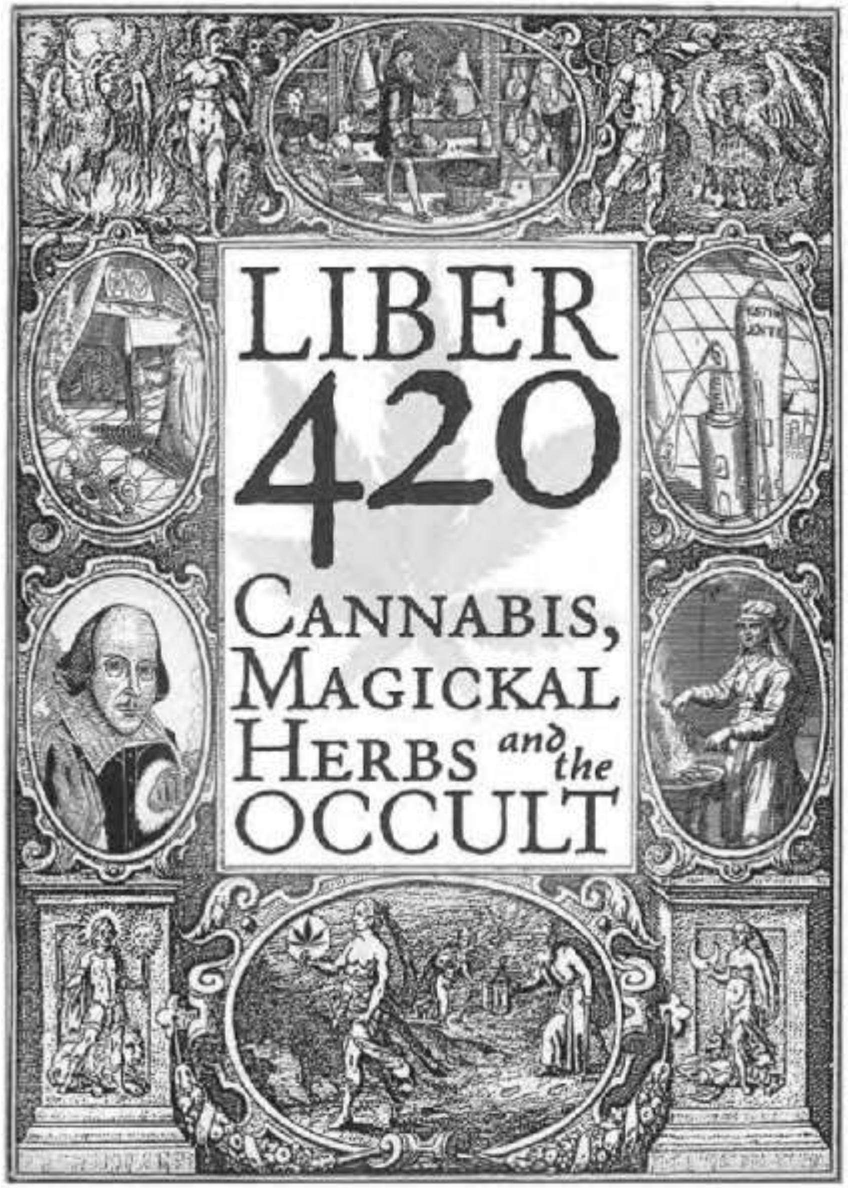


LIBER 420

CANNABIS, MAGICKAL HERBS and the OCCULT

CHRIS BENNETT





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CHRIS BENNETT

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Dedicated to Francois

Rabelais (1494-1553),
For he had more wit in his noggin, courage in his heart, scent
in his bottom,
and rare drugs in his Sileni Box, than any man of his time.

Francois Rabelais (1494-1553) "Extractor of the Quintessence"

Foreword

Iwas so very excited and honoured when Chris Bennett asked me to write this forward! Not simply because this book contains an important missing piece of the puzzle that is Western occult history (thought it absolutely is - I'll get back to that), but also because my contribution to it is something of a milestone - you might even say coming full circle - in my own studies. Over a decade ago I published some material about the European grimoires - which are obscure medieval and Renaissance-era magical books often attributed to mythological figures such as King Solomon, Moses, or Enoch. In my work, I took the then-controversial position that the magick presented in these grimoires was a kind of "urban shamanism"; specifically meaning the grimoire magician (one of the archetypes for our own modern concept of a "wizard") fulfilled the vocation of prophet, healer, and emissary between his (or her) community and the world of spirits. They just happened to do that job in medieval and Renaissance Europe, rather than among nomadic tribes out in the wilderness.

Of course, if one is going to relate the methods of the medieval wizard to the tribal shaman, it's going to lead to one obvious and vital question: did the Solomonic wizard use the most famous of shamanic ritual tools - mind-altering drugs? That was a trickier subject to tackle! I knew it was going to cause a stir, because most adults these days were raised under the malicious influence of the modern "War on Drugs." For that reason, any mention of drugs in relation to magick led to emotional (usually fear-based) reactions rather than intellectual conversation. In that mindset, drugs are bad. Period. Therefore they can't have a role in magick. Drugs only give you hallucinations, not real visions. Drugs are just a crutch, an easy way out of doing the real work. I'd heard it all!

But, of course, a close look at history shows the shamans and witches and wizards of the past haven't seen drugs as crutches, nor the visions they produce as fake. Instead, they have tended to see hallucinogenic plants and substances as empowered by the gods, put here quite specifically to grant mankind the experience of the Divine and communication with the world of spirits.

I ended up dedicating an entire chapter of my first book to the question of drugs, shamanism, and the grimoires. I presented the best evidence I could find that the grimoire masters had indeed known about and even made use of psychotropics. For example, drugs are openly mentioned in several places - such as in Agrippa's *First Book of Occult Philosophy*, chapters 38 (concerning how to draw down celestial gifts from above) and 43 (concerning the power of incenses). Both of these describe herbs and incenses known to produce visions, and even mentions known hallucinogenic plants like henbane, hemlock, and poppy. (All of which are also ingredients in the "flying ointments" of European witchcraft lore.)

I also made reference to the many grimoire spells that Professor Richard Kieckhefer calls "illusory" (see his *Forbidden Rites*) and which are often similar to typical shamanic visions: from flying in the sky, to visiting the underworld, to conjuring phantom armies or elaborate spirit feasts. (The latter are very similar to European folklore concerning Fairy Feasts.) Most of the practice of evocation - which forms the bulk of the grimoires - can also fall under this heading. We can even see how the visions produced by different methods could very well mirror the drugs taken to achieve them: such as henbane and belladonna causing visions of terrible demons, while drugs like magic mushrooms and cannabis might produce visions of angels.

There are even surviving records of medieval mages at work, which seem to indicate the use of hallucinogens. One of the most obvious examples, which I found in Elizabeth Butler's *Ritual Magic*, concerns a Faustian mage by the name of Johann Georg Schröpfer (1739-1774 CE). He was hired by Prince Charles of Saxony to perform a necromantic evocation of his (Charles') own recently-deceased uncle, who was believed to have hidden treasure somewhere on his estate. Nineteen guests were invited to witness the event - one of whom was not only skeptical of the proceedings, but happens to be the one who provided the written account. According to him, Johann began the ritual by passing around a bowl full of a strange liquid. Each person was encouraged to drink, as the conjurer promised it would "fortify them for the upcoming ordeal." Our author, however, refused the drink - and he was the only person present who did *not* experience visions of the spirits that night. It doesn't take a huge leap of faith or logic to guess what kind of drink was in that bowl.

I even explored several traditions that predated the grimoires, but had a direct impact upon them. For example, the Biblical prophets - who were shamans in their own right. I had seen conjecture those guys had made use of substances like cannabis and mushrooms to generate their visions - and it was during my research into that field I first encountered the work of Chris Bennett. He had written a series of articles, collectively entitled *Smoke Gets In My I*, that explored the use of cannabis in various ancient Western cultures - including the Biblical prophets. Therein, the author made a compelling case that Moses' sacred anointing oil and incense (for use strictly within the Tabernacle, and later Solomon's Temple) had actually contained large amounts of cannabis (*kaneh bosem*); or, in the case of the oil, cannabis extract. The famous Tent of Meeting (and later the Holy of Holies in the Temple) was very likely a sealed "smoke lodge" where the sacred kaneh bosem was burned in large amounts by the prophets and priests – who were also anointed with the oil – to produce visions of Yahweh. I was elated to find this material, and *Smoke*

Gets In My I became a major source for my own chapter on the subject.

Even closer to home, though, is a highly influential (and infamous) book of magick called the *Picatrix*. This Arabic grimoire is one of the primary sources of the Solomonic tradition - giving the European grimoires much of their format and even content. The general methods utilized for evocation in the Solomonic texts can be found in their original forms in the *Picatrix*. Agrippa quoted entire portions of it into his own *Three Books*... Even medieval mages considered the *Picatrix* to be a dark, dangerous, and exceedingly powerful book. (In more modern times, H.P. Lovecraft would base his fictional *Necronomicon* on its legends.) And what makes this important to our current subject is that it contains spells that include extremely large amounts of hallucinogenic drugs - such as opium and hashish.

The only thing I couldn't do – at the time I was writing – was point to a specific spell in the European texts that directly included the use of such hallucinogens. There were plenty of places where they seemed to be implied: such as the *Key of Solomon*'s "Magic Carpet" - where you lay under a large consecrated carpet, burning incense in a censor. It sounds much like the previously-mentioned Tent of Meeting, intended to produce visions through smoke inhalation. But the *Key of Solomon* doesn't say *what* should be burned in the censer with you beneath the carpet.

Then there is the anointing oil mentioned in several texts - such as the *Goetia*, where one is instructed to anoint their temples and eye(lid)s. Those are places where flying ointments were sometimes applied, along with the forehead, the wrists, and the soles of the feet, because these spots allow for easy absorption of the oil's active ingredients into the bloodstream. But the *Goetia* doesn't tell us the recipe for its oil. (We do have a recipe in the *Book of Abramelin*, which is based on the one found in Exodus. But even if that original recipe called for kaneh bosem, Abramelin had already changed it to calamus.)

You won't find a grimoire that tells you to heap cannabis on the censer. Their divination spells do not mention opium. Even the systems intended to elevate you into the heavens to meet with angels or see the Face of God make no mention of mushrooms. While there is some evidence drugs were used by some individuals, and implications they are intended in many of the texts, why wouldn't the grimoires' authors routinely mention them? The modern drug war didn't exist then, right? And even if it did, the grimoires were already illegal; authoring or possessing them was punishable by torture and death. In that case, listing belladonna as an ingredient in an incense won't likely be the crime that gets you lynched in a text that tells you how to conjure demons to kill your enemies.

Thus, anyone who asserts drugs had nothing to do with the grimoires only needs to point to their obvious absence from the books - and it's hard to argue. It's almost as if European mages collectively decided, with only rare exceptions, that "drugs are bad" and excluded them from their grimoires. It would have to have been a conscious decision, too, given that so many of their sources feature them prominently. (There is precedent for this, by the way, as a great many of the European grimoires also chose to omit the making of offerings and sacrifice to spirits, as it conflicted with their Christian theology. It was "too pagan.") And so, we are left with the questions: were drugs purposefully removed from the Western Occult Tradition? And if so, lacking an official War on Drugs, *why* were they removed?

And that is where Chris Bennett re-enters the picture. Having explored the subject of cannabis and other drugs through ancient Western history (see *Cannabis and the Soma Solution*), he also wanted to know why they seemed to be missing from later records. I'm sure he, like myself, suspected the drugs were there just the same, and his research led him to my chapter on the subject.

(Apparently, I am one of very few modern occult authors who openly discussed the likely role drugs played in the grimoires. When Chris found me on social media, and I discovered he had read my work and loved it, I was a bit star struck. Is there anything better than getting a thumbs-up from someone whose work influenced your own? But let me get back to the subject...)

Chris was able to discover a key fact that I was not: there actually *was* a War on Drugs during the period the grimoires were written! That, at least in my opinion, is the key to the entire book you are now holding. If there was no drug war, their absence from the grimoires makes no sense. If you could run down to the local apothecary and buy some opium for a couple of farthings to help you sleep, why shouldn't it be included as an ingredient for spirit-summoning incense?

But, guess what, you *couldn't* just buy some opium in the village square! As you will learn from the chapters of this book, religious authorities had decided that - like making sacrifices to spirits - the ingestion of drugs as entheogens in ritual was just "too pagan." It was the way *those people* communicated with their devils and spirits, and therefore good Christian people just didn't do that kind of thing. Drugs were outlawed, and possessing them could land you in as much trouble as possessing a poppet or a grimoire. It was *Reefer Madness 1215*!

That does, however, leave us with the question of the underground nature of the grimoires. As I said above, they were already illegal - so why would the authors care if they mentioned the drugs directly? Why be sly and imply them, the way we often do in today's anti-drug environment? Well...

It was because, just like today's anti-drug environment, it went beyond the strictly legal and into the cultural. By the time these magic books were written, the culture was much like today's: "drugs are bad", "good (Christian) people don't do drugs", "drugs give you false visions", and therefore "magick has nothing to do with drugs." Meanwhile, the authors of the grimoires were desperate to convince their readers they were in fact good, devout, Christians. As much as occultists do today, they wanted the public to understand what they were doing wasn't evil, wasn't satanic, but was in fact holy and beneficial.

That is why nearly every grimoire elevates its own system to an exalted divine science, but blasts all other systems as vile deceptions of the Devil. They are essentially saying, "We aren't like *those people*." And this is the same reason why the hallucinogenic drugs are rarely mentioned in the grimoires, and never appear directly as ingredients in any summoning or divination ritual. Their absence is just more of the author's insistence that his magick isn't like *those people's* - those vile worshipers of devils who take strange drugs and dance naked in the moonlight! Never! (This may also explain why hallucinogens are absent from the grimoires while still present in witch's recipes, like the flying ointments, from the same period.)

Of course, what Chris will cover in this book is going to go far beyond just the grimoires or the medieval/Renaissance's "Ye War upon Druggs." He has followed the white rabbit through the *Picatrix* and the Solomonic texts, to the Rosicrucians, to the Masons and the occult lodges of the 19th Century, through alchemy, witchcraft, and much more. Cannabis and other mind-altering substances have been an underground and occluded fact of the Western Mystery Tradition all along. So buckle in! You're about to learn some of your favorite occult philosophers most likely took a few strange drugs in their day, and maybe even danced naked in the moonlight once or twice.

Aaron Leitch
February 2018

Aaron Leitch author of *Secrets of the Magickal Grimoires: The Classical Texts of Magick Deciphered* (2005); *Ritual Offerings* (2017); *The Essential Enochian Grimoire: An Introduction to Angel Magick from Dr. John Dee to the Golden Dawn* (2014); *1: The Angelical Language, Volume I: The Complete History and Mythos of the Tongue of Angels* (2010). *2: The Angelical Language, Volume II: An Encyclopedic Lexicon of the Tongue of Angels* (2010);

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Introduction

In a New York flat, on April 20th 1918, as part of an ongoing series of invocations and rituals, A magician and his two assistants recorded the following in a diary entry at the start of their night's events:

> 10.45 [p.m.] Achitha, Therion and Arcteon take 1 cc of Hashish.
> 11.10 Achitha and Arcteon 1 cc Hashish.
> 11.30 Achitha and Arcteon 1 cc Hashish.

Therion was a magical name of the famous British Magician, Aleister Crowley and his assistants were Roddie Minor, and Charles Stansfeld Jones. Each "cc" signifies a gram of hashish, which is a considerable amount when ingested. This ritual use of cannabis resins was part of the "Amalantrah Working," a now legendary event in some occult circles, and which took place over a number of months in 1918 while Crowley was living in New York. Besides the use of hashish, mescaline was also ingested as part of the invocations performed.

Liber 420, sees its release on the centennial anniversary of this ritual ingestion of cannabis for magical purposes. Many have seen the use of "drugs" such as this as a mere offshoot of the occult tradition, largely popularized by Crowley and his associates in the late 19th and early 20th century. This view is not uncommon among both academic and modern practitioners of ceremonial magick, likewise with witchcraft and its historians and modern adherents of that neo-pagan tradition. However, the use of cannabis and other magickal plants, (i.e. – psychoactive, in regards to this study) in magickal practice is as old as the craft itself, and as we shall see there is much evidence to demonstrate this is the case.

This book will be taking a look at the references to cannabis, and on occasion other magical herbs, in such occult traditions as ceremonial magic, and alchemy, along with its potential role in a variety of different "secret societies," focusing from about the 12th century forward. References to cannabis and hashish in grimoires like *The Picatrix* and *Sepher Raziel: Liber Salomonis*, and its use by alchemical figures like Zosimos, Avicenna, Geber, Paracelsus, Cardano and Rabelais, well be explored in detail. As well as hemp's role in folk magick and witchcraft. Many centuries-old documents will appear here, translated to English for the first time.

It will also be shown that the role of cannabis in later European magick and occultism did not magically appear out of thin air, and a number of avenues through which it likely came about will be explored. The ritual use of cannabis and a variety of other psychoactive substances is much older than these medieval and later accounts, and the ancient origins of the use of cannabis and other substances is something which a number of the later occultists in question also referred to, in regard to their own adoption of such practices. As the late Professor of Classics Georg Luck (1926-2013) noted of this situation:

> The idea that drugs played a role in the great religions of antiquity as they do in tribal societies in Africa and South America is still abhorrent to many scholars today. Perhaps they are willing to admit it for ancient Egypt – but for Greece? For Athens? For the Eleusinian Mysteries? For Ancient Israel? And yet the evidence is strong. Psychoactive substances reached the brains of the believers in many different ways: in food and drink, in oil rubbed into the skin, in smoke inhaled. We should not underestimate the experiences of the priests in this area (Luck, 1985/2006).

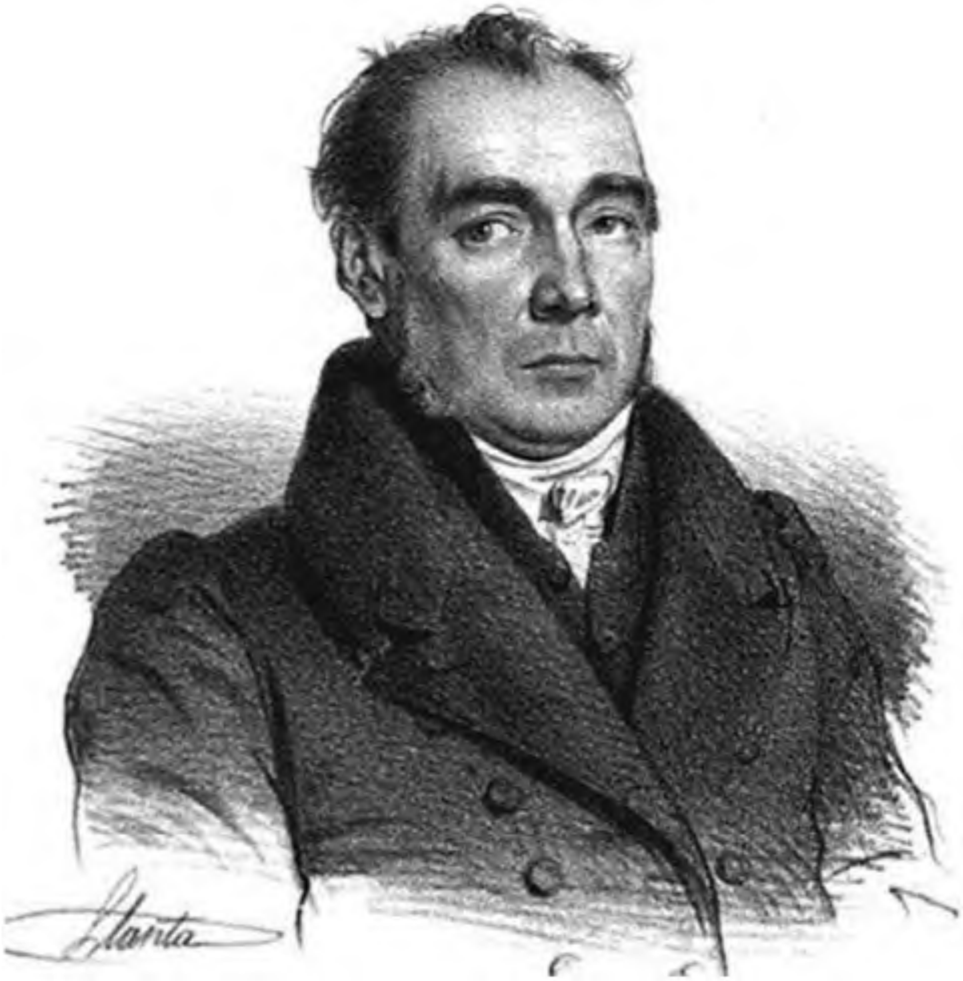
Similar prejudice against these substances has seen them left out of much of Occult history as well, and the use of cannabis and other intoxicants in both situations are only just beginning to see some acceptance in academic circles.

> [I]n magic, drugs were used as well as in religion, probably more regularly and consistently, because so much depended on the moment. This should not come as a surprise.... A quick survey of the magical papyri shows how often special incense was burned and aromatic oils were applied. Some of the ingredients are well-known psychoactive substances. Even

> where no specific recipe are given, we may assume that, more often than not, some kind of smoke was required (Luck, 1985/2006).

Such ideas had already long been shared in Occult circles, and books of magic, notably with Eusèbe Salverte 1829 edition of *Des Sciences Occultes ou Essai sur la Magie, les Prodiges et les Miracles*, which was followed by its English counterpart *The Occult Sciences: The Philosophy of Magic, Prodigies and Apparent Miracles* in 1846. Salverte devoted two chapters to psychoactive preparations in Volume 2 of his ground breaking works, identifying cannabis, opium , datura, belladonna and speculating on other yet to be discovered ancient drugs as well. Salverte preceded the modern view that the Eleusinian Mysteries were an ancient Greek drug-infused initiation ritual, as suggested by modern scientists and scholars such as creator of LSD Dr. Albert Hoffman, mycologist R. Gordon Wasson and Professor of Classics Carl Ruck (1978) by a century and a half. Salverte cited examples of ancient drug use among Gnostics, Witches, Medieval Hashisheens and other groups.

> The aspirants to initiation, and those who came to request prophetic dreams of the Gods, were prepared by a fast, more or less prolonged, after which they partook of meals expressly prepared; and also of mysterious drinks ... in the mysteries of the Eleusinia. Different drugs were easily mixed up with the meats, or, introduced into the drinks, according to the state of mind or body into which it was necessary to throw the recipient, and the nature of the visions he was desirous of procuring.... Magicians have, in all ages, made use of similar secrets (Salverte, 1829/1849).



Eusèbe de Salverte (1771 - 1839)

As a modern proponent of entheogenic theory, Prof Dan Merkur has noted "...Salverte's *Sciences Occultes* seems to have inaugurated an era when occultists wrote candidly about several drugs, and references to alchemical elixirs and powders became increasingly transparent as drug references. Drug use in the occult prior to Salverte was generally more discreet" (Merkur, 2014).

Discreet yes, but as we shall see not unknown or unrecorded. However, during times of persecution, the burning of heretics at the stake for the most trivial of transgressions was not at all uncommon, and discretion often meant survival for those who followed the entheogenic path.

With the rise of the Roman Catholic Church and the advent of the Dark Ages, Western humanity came to be largely separated from the magical shamanic roots of their earlier Pagan traditions, and the beginning of the return of this connection occurred largely at the time of the crusades. Contact with the Islamic world led to a variety of hermetic influences and the introduction and reintroduction of a variety of exotic substances, such as hashish and opium. This rediscovery, as we shall see, greatly influenced the flavor of both the mythologies of the Holy Grail, and alchemical myths of the Philosopher's Stone.

Indeed, some of the first stories that came back from medieval European travelers to the Mid-East, such as the records of Arnold of Lübeck (died 1211-1214), and Marco Polo (1254-1324) contained references to hashish and other exotic substances. Likewise, some of Europe's first novels like Giovanni Boccaccio's *The Decameron* and Francois Rabelais' *The Adventures of Gargantua and Pantagruel*, are known for their veiled references to cannabis and its preparations.

Modern readers, who are familiar with cannabis' effects may at first find this relationship between cannabis and the occult hard to accept, based on their own personal experiences of recreational use, and assume the use of more "potent" narcotics and psychedelics are being identified. However, it is important to remember that ancient magicians and initiates and their later counterparts in the occult scene were not recreational users of cannabis. Set and setting played a key role in fermenting the right state of mind to elicit these "spiritual" experiences, and we can be sure that magical ceremonies more often than not accompanied their use. Also, dosage levels and means of ingestion provided users with a much more powerful experience than that of the typical smoked joint or bowl of hashish, albeit, that even in mild doses, cannabis, introduced in the right mood and place, can have an entheogenic effect. As Dr. Michael Aldrich has described:

> There is a myth that pot is a mild and minor drug. Usually in context of American usage it is, but it doesn't have to be. The hard part about expressing this, however, is that the anti marijuana people who pose visions of disaster about "hashish" or about "legalizing the stronger forms of cannabis" are also wrong. In and of itself there's nothing wrong with

> cannabis being a potent hallucinogen; this has certainly accounted for its vast popularity through these many centuries. When one seeks a shaman's drug one generally wants something more powerful than a "mild hallucinogen." Of course, knowing when and where to use cannabis at a dosage or strength suitable for real visions is also important. It's obviously not a good idea to try in an unrefined social context, or when working in the fields or factory. This use of cannabis has traditionally been confined, by rational custom in ancient societies, to rituals which help define and control, measure and magnify, the raw experience.[1]

As with the identical role of psychoactive herbs in ancient religion, little has been written about the role of such substances in the occult world. It is hoped that this volume will remedy that situation. As Crowley's secretary Israel Regardie noted in his own worthy tome to this sacred herb, it is time to *Roll Away the Stone*...

ENDNOTES

1. In (Novak, 1980

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[1] In (Novak, 1980)

The methods of producing the magical states at will and artificially are here of ancient date and universal knowledge. Of narcotic substances, opium, hemp, and deadly nightshade, we find the most accurate accounts, and they are still in use among the modem Persians, Moslems, and Arabs. Theurgy even contained the art of communicating with Spirits and of subjecting them. Thus the nature of the vision often shows that they are produced by artificial means; the flying and absence of the soul; visions and transformations into animals.

– Joseph Ennemoser
Geschichte der Magie, (1844/1854)

CHAPTER 1

In The Beginning...

The role of cannabis in the magic and religion of the ancient world is something that I have treated at length in a number of books, anthologies and journals. Much of the information in this chapter has been adapted from my last book, *Cannabis and the Soma Solution*, and I would direct the reader there for a more in-depth understanding of the paramount role that cannabis played in the spiritual life of man in the ancient world. Although this use came to be widespread throughout the ancient world, in this overview I will try to restrict the description to the groups whose influence seems to be most relevant to the later European occult traditions that this study is focused on.

The role of cannabis in the ancient world was manifold: with its nutritious seeds, an important food; and its long, pliable strong stalks a fiber, as well as an early medicine – cannabis appears in the oldest pharmacopeias (Russo, 2010); and, importantly for this study, as a magically empowered religious sacrament (Bennett, et. al., 1995: Bennett, 2010). Current archaeological evidence for the use of hemp fibers has been estimated, based on hemp cloth fragments 12,000 years old, and much older tools used for breaking hemp stalk into fibers, indicate man has been using cannabis for cloth "since 25,000 B.C. at least" (Barber, 1999). "In 1997, a hemp rope dating back to 26,900 B.C. was found in Czechoslovakia. It was the oldest evidence for hemp fiber" (Seydibeyoglu, et. al. 2017).

Its seems likely that by the time humanity began weaving the fibers of the plant into cloth, they had already been familiar with it for centuries, if not millennia. The late Professor Richard E. Schultes of Harvard University, considered the father of modern ethnobotany, believed it was likely, in the search for food, that humanity first discovered cannabis and its protein rich seeds:

> Early man experimented with all plant materials that he could chew and could not have avoided discovering the properties of cannabis (marijuana), for in his quest for seeds and oil, he certainly ate the sticky tops of the plant. Upon eating hemp, the euphoric, ecstatic and hallucinatory aspects may have introduced man to the other-worldly plane from which emerged religious beliefs, perhaps even the concept of deity. The plant became accepted as a special gift of the gods, a sacred medium for communion with the spiritual world and as such it has remained in some cultures to the present (Schultes, 1973).

There has been interesting scientific speculation that the psychoactive properties of cannabis may have played a role as a catalyst in the epoch of advancement that is known as the Great Leap Forward, where it may have aided prehistoric man with novel new ways of thought processes, and developments in tool making. Doctors John McPartland and Geoffrey Guy, in their fascinating paper, "The Evolution of Cannabis and Coevolution with the Cannabis Receptor – A Hypothesis," postulate that a plant ligand, such as the cannabinoids of the hemp plant, "may exert sufficient selection pressure to maintain the gene for a receptor in an animal. If the plant ligand improves the fitness of the receptor by serving as a 'proto-medicine' or a performance-enhancing substance, the ligand-and-recep-tor association could be evolutionarily conserved" (McPartland & Guy, 2004). There is also current research suggesting a very early role for cannabis with hunter gatherer man as a medicine for parasite prevention (Roulette, et. al., 2016).

However, speculation aside, based on collected archaeological evidence, we can see that Cannabis has been used for its resinous psychoactive properties for more than five thousand years. The late archaeologist Andrew Sherratt of the Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford, pointed to the use of cannabis incenses at a grave-site of a group known as the Proto-Indo-Europeans, the Kurgans, who occupied what is now Romania 5,500 years ago. The discovery of a smoking-cup which contained remnants of charred hemp seeds at the site documents that 3,500 years before Christ humanity had been using cannabis for religious purposes for millennia (Sherratt, 1995).

These Kurgans were the first to domesticate the horse, a accomplished it is believed, with hemp ropes. Thus it is a widely held view that it was their nomadic horse-riding descendants, such as the collection of steppe tribes we now know under the collective title as Scythians, that cannabis was first spread around much of the ancient world. Linguistics have left a trace, as the first linguistic roots for the term "cannabis," comes from an ancient Proto-Indo-European root word, "kanap"; the "an" from this root left traces in many modern terms for cannabis, such as French "chanvre," German "hanf," Indian "bhang," Persian "bhanga," Dutch "Canvas," Greek "Kannabis," and so on. Through their high mobility, these ancient nomadic horse riders spread the use of cannabis to numerous cultures, not only in name and application, but also with the religious and magical connotations that had grown around it. Evidence of this has left its traces in some of the world's oldest existing religions, and cultures.

The Scythians

The Scythians (as the Greeks referred to them) were also known as the Sakas (as the Persians knew them) and they are one of the most fascinating, yet barbaric, pre-common era cannabis-using societies. With no written language, much of what we known of them comes from surviving descriptions left to us by other cultures, and astonishingly well-preserved grave sites, known as Kurgans. The Scyths were a culture of warriors – men and women fought alongside each other – and both had beautifully intricate tattoos, and elaborate armor that covered riders and horses. Their striking appearance left a strong impression on the other cultures they came into contact with.

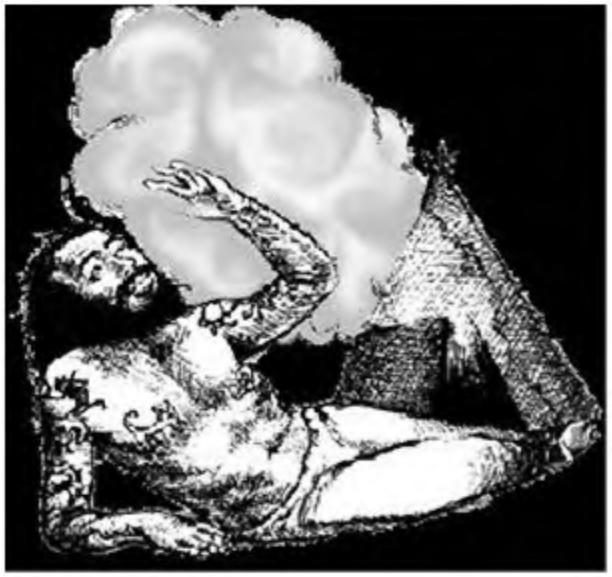
Although known for their sometimes brutal savagery, they were also regarded for their nobility as well. The ancient Greek historian, Ephorus (4th century B.C.) stated that the Scythians "excel all men in justice," followed by the comments of Strabo (1st century B.C.): "we regard the Scythians as the most just of men and the least prone to mischief, as also far more frugal and independent of others than we are."

The Scythian's use of cannabis, three millennia after their proto-Indo-European ancestors first began inhaling its fumes, was recorded by the Greek historian, Herodotus, who described the use at a funerary rite:

> The burial completed, the Scyths cleanse themselves in the following manner. They soap their heads and wash their hair, and then to cleanse their bodies they do as follows: they set up three sticks leaning together which they cover with woolen felts, and in the circular shelter created as best they can they put stones heated in a fire into a vessel set within a shelter.... In Scythia they grow hemp.... And then the Scyths take some of its seeds, creep under the felt and scatter the seeds over the hot stones, which gives off greater clouds of steam than in any Greek steam bath. The Scyths delighted by the steam, are loudly exultant.

The Scythians would suffumigate cannabis, i.e. , not having the benefit of the invention of pipes, they would capture the fumes of the heated cannabis in tents. This became a common method of cannabis inhalation in the ancient world. Herodotus's claims were confirmed more than two thousand years later with a variety of archaeological finds. Most notably, in tombs in Paryzyk, the Russian archaeologist Sergei Rudenko uncovered a frozen Scythian burial mound that housed a mummified tattooed Scythian warrior king. Also recovered at the site with weapons, gold ornaments, and other items, were braziers with remnants of burnt cannabis, and apparatus for small portable tents that were used to contain the fumes of the burnt plant. From these remnants, we now know that the cannabis seeds described by Herodotus were in fact seeded buds (Rudenko, 1970).

The burning of plants to produce psychoactive smoke, was a very important development in the magical life of ancient man. Smoke was a particularly effective means for producing altered states in a group situation. "[I]n some religious ceremonies and in many magical rituals, trance was desired, and the smoke was instrumental, because through it the priest the medium, the magus, the shaman, and others could participate in the ultimate experience. To offer a pharmakon in a drink was not always practicable ... but smoke has the advantage of reaching a large group, if it is strong enough" (Luck, 1985/2006).



The above account is interesting in comparison with the use of cannabis by the shaman of the Scythian, and related Thracian tribes. The Thracian shaman were known as Kapnobatai, or "smoke-walkers." The Kapnobatai burned cannabis believing that the living entity within the plant reassembled itself inside their bodies to give divine revelations. The 1925 book, *Psyche: The Cult of Souls and the Belief in Immortality Among the Greeks*, Erwin Rohde, states that "The Thracians knew hemp. It was thus with a sort of hashish that they intoxicated themselves.... The Thracians ... may very well have used intoxication through hashish-fumes as a means of exciting themselves to their ecstatic religious dances. The Ancients were quite familiar with the practice of inhaling aromatic smoke to produce religious hallucinations" (Rohde, 1925). Likewise, noted Professor of Religious History and Comparative Religion, Mircea Eliade also referred to the use of hemp among the Thracians, stating that the Kapnobatai were "dancers and 'shamans' who used the smoke of hemp to bring ecstatic trances" (Eliade, 1982).[1]

Ancient accounts also indicate along with its role in "wakes for the dead," the Scythian shaman utilized cannabis and other drugs for "ecstasy" as well. A burial mound of a tattooed women mummy, seen as a shamanic leader of the tribe or the "Spirits' chosen," has also been found with cannabis. "Witchcraft played a great part in Scythian life. The wizards divined with bundles of sticks, and the Enarees by plaiting [with spindles] fast (Nijjar, 2008). In *Greek and Roman Necromancy*, Daniel Ogden refers to a passage from Seneca's *Medea* (circa 1st century A.D.) where the poet "Statius makes a ... implicit attribution of necromancy to [*Medea*] when his Tiresias compares himself favorably to a Colchian woman calling up ghosts with Scythian drugs" (Ogden, 2001).

The Scyths were also known for their conical hats, in many ways identical in appearance with that associated with the classic witches of Europe. Like later European witches, we find the use of psychoactive plants, shape shifting, casting curses, and other aspects also attributed to their Scythian predecessors. In relation to this it is interesting to note that a Scythian influence on later European witchcraft has been convincingly argued by Carlo Ginzburg in *Ecstasies: Deciphering the Witches' Sabbath* (Ginzburg, 2004).

It is also important to note, artifacts from Scythian tombs have shown that cannabis was not only burnt by the Scythians, but also consumed in infused beverages. Botanist Robert C. Clarke has described a horn cup that was discovered in a Paryzyk tomb, where braziers for burning cannabis were also found. The vessel was "8 inches tall, crafted from neatly sewn plates of steamed and bent horn – contained ceremonial drink includes cannabis, -light, -portable, unbreakable" (Clarke, 1998). More recent evidence, that shall be discussed in Chapter 4, shows that elaborate cups came to be used for this purpose among the Scythians. "The power of manifesting states of inspiration and prophetic powers was greatly enhanced when men learnt to make intoxicating beverages.... The mental phenomena presented under the effect of stimulants may be excited ideality, inspiration, the desire to prophecy ... and under these conditions the wondering savage looks on and marvels, deeming the herb or fruit capable of inducing such effects of divine origin and those special manifestations the evidence of a supernal state" (King, 1892).

The practice of consuming cannabis in beverages seems to have been particularly popular with the Scythians in the Persian regions, where as we noted earlier, they were more commonly known as the Sakas. Interestingly this consumption of cannabis in beverages by the Scythians, has been connected with one of the enigmas of ancient history, a sacred libation known in the Persian religious texts, the *Avesta*, as Haoma, and in the related Indian Tradition of the Vedas, as Soma. This similarity in names, as well as in language and mythology, is due to the fact that the two religions have an identical origin with a much earlier cannabis-using Indo-European cult.

The names Soma and Haoma make reference to a symbol, that was at once a god, a plant, a drink, and the moon in the sky. Various botanical candidates have been suggested as being the basis for Soma/Haoma, such as the fly agaric mushroom, Syrian rue, ephedra, blue lotus and mushroom species such as psilocybin and fly agaric, along with other candidates.

However, as is shown in my previous book, *Cannabis* *and the Soma Solution*, there is new archaeological evidence that indicates the ancient Soma and Haoma was likely a preparation that included cannabis. A wide variety of Indian scholars have also suggested the Vedic Soma, was a cannabis based beverage, (Bennett, 2010).

The connections with cannabis have been further strengthened by the archaeological finds of cannabis present at a 4000-year-old Temple site in the ancient Bactria and Margiana region, known now as BMAC (The Bactria Margiana Archaeological Complex). The Temple site at BMAC was devoted to the preparation of the Haoma, according to the Russian archaeologist Victor Sarianidi, where he claims evidence of cannabis, ephedra, and in some later cases opium, was ground and strained for the preparation of Haoma, has been found.

Respected cannabis historian, Dr. Mike Aldrich notes that ephedra, which contains ephedrine was likely added to the sacred beverage for its stimulating effects, enabling the partakers to stay wide awake through the night in singing and dancing festivals. "...this was handed out in the public room of these sanctuaries, and drunk by the people in the form of a libation, and then they would have all night singing and dancing festivals, just as they still do at the Kumbha Mela for Soma in India" (Aldrich, 2012).

The cannabis beverage bhang is consumed freely throughout the Kumbha Mela, but in modern times, more commonly the chillum filled with ganja (marijuana) or charas (hashish) are used in its place. On the topic of BMAC, it is interesting to note that Professor Victor Sarianidi states that it has been a longstanding theory with some historians that the "nomadic Scythians/Saka from ancient times had made attempts to settle on the fertile lands of Margiana. This assumption is now fully supported by ... archaeological facts..." (Sarianidi, 1998).

The Scythian relationship with Haoma was indeed close, so much so, that they were widely known as the "Haoma-Gatherers." Referring to the Scythians under their Persian name of the "Sakas," Guive Mirfendereski noted that the Scythians of eastern Central Asia are called "Homa Saka" and "haumavarka" (Haoma-gatherers) (Mirfendereski, 2005). Like Mirfendereski, who believes the title Haomavarga came to the Scythians through their use of hemp, archaeologist Bruno Jacobs has likewise suggested that the name was derived from the Scythian practice of laying cannabis on hot stones to release its intoxicating vapors (Jacobs, 1982).

Interestingly, the identification of cannabis with Soma and Haoma was not unknown among occultists of the 19th century. This may have been due in part to George W. Brown's *Researches in Oriental History*: "...Haoma ... an intoxicating beverage, prepared from the green stalks of the moon-plant.... Cannabis Indica, or Indian hemp ... was tasted by the priests on sacrificial occasions, whilst hymns were sung in its praise. Its action was that of hashish. It produced intoxication and stimulation of the senses, which were taken for inspiration" (Brown, 1890).

Cannabis has been similarly tied with the Haoma Indian counterpart Soma for more than a century as well. The 1894 Edition of *North Indian Notes and Queries*, Vol. 4 contains an essay by John Cockburn, "Hemp and the Soma," which similarly concluded "...There can be no reasonable doubt that Soma was bhang" (Cockburn, 1894). Edward Albert Gait refers to "hemp (Soma) in Vedic times" (Gait, 1902), and in a 1921 article by Braja Lal Mukherjee, "The Soma Plant," appeared in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (which was a response to an earlier paper on the identity of Soma) also put forth a theory presenting cannabis, "bhang," as a serious candidate for Soma.

Such ideas had clearly filtered into occult circles, and as we shall see later, it is believed the occult lodge The Brotherhood of Luxor, was using cannabis as Soma in their initiation ceremonies. Also French Occultist, and mystical user of hashish, René Guénon, believed the Soma myths were the source of the later European Grail Myths, and this connection has also been made with the Scythians. Subjects that will be more fully explored.

An illustration for the 19th century ghost story, *Pallinghurst Barrow* (Allen, 1892), tells the tale of a migraine sufferer who seeks the aid of a visiting doctor, who tells the patient; "I'll bring you up a draught that will put that all right in less than half an hour. What Mrs. Bruce calls Soma – the fine old crusted remedy of our Aryan ancestor; there's nothing like it for cases of nervous initiation...I'll leave you the bottle... only use it with caution. Ten drops in two hours if the pain continues. Not more than ten, recollect. It's a powerful narcotic – I daresay you know its name: it's Cannabis Indica." The effects of the drug throw the main character into a state of consciousness where he witnesses the ghosts of ancient Neanderthals at a nearby burial site. References to "The Mirror of Trismegistus" indicate that the story had been flavored by the occult practices of the day, for as we shall see, magic mirrors and cannabis, have had a centuries old connection in the magical tradition.

As the Theosophical Society founder H.P. Blavatsky noted of Soma in her classic book *The Secret Doctrine*: "…[T]he real property of the true Soma was (and is) to make a new man of the Initiate, after he is reborn, namely once that he begins to live in his astral body…. The partaker of Soma finds himself both linked to his external body, and yet away from it in his spiritual form. The latter, freed from the former, soars for the time being in the ethereal higher regions, becoming virtually 'as one of the gods,' and yet preserving in his physical brain the memory of what he sees and learns. Plainly speaking, Soma is the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge forbidden by the jealous Elohim to Adam and Eve or Yah-ve, 'lest Man should become as one of us.'" (Blavatsky, 1888)

According to H.H. Dubs, in *The Beginnings of Alchemy*, the idea of an elixir of immortality came into China via the myths about the Indo-Iranian Soma and Haoma plants, which were also considered drinks of immortality. Dubs believed knowledge of the plant came from the Iranian culture area into China around the 4th century B.C. or possibly even earlier (Dubs, 1947). The Taoists considered cannabis to be an ingredient of one of the superior elixirs of immortality (Needham, 1974). Pierre Huard and Ming Wong, in regard to Taoist references to immortality elixirs, also noted that "Traces of Indo-European immortality potions can be seen here: The Iranian Haoma … and the Indo-Aryan Soma…. For centuries Taoists and alchemists were to seek the elixir of life in plants and pills…" (Huard & Wong, 1959: 1968). Clearly, the elixir-of-life concept came to China by way of the ancient Vedic Soma tradition of the divine plant of immortality, and as we shall see, this same later origin can be seen in its European counterpart of alchemy, in the various elixirs of immortality there. Recent archaeological discoveries of cannabis flowers in China, with the remains of Indo-European mummies dating back to 2,700-2,800 years ago, have strengthened this connection. These mummies have also been found with ephedra, and they are remnants of the Indo-European Gushi culture which lived in China from about 2,000-400 B.C. when the indigenous Chinese ran them off. Archaeological evidence indicates their trade with the BMAC "Soma" temples that Sarianidi discovered. It has been suggested that the Chinese name for cannabis, Hu-Ma, Became Haoma as it traveled into the BMAC region, carrying its Chinese name with it.

In India the Soma cult was suppressed with the rise of more ascetic Buddhism, and drinking any intoxicant, meat eating, along with elaborate rituals all but disappeared from Indian life. However, cannabis use re-emerged with the indigenous Indian cult of Shiva, referred to as "The Lord of Bhang" whose worshipers still partake of cannabis by smoking and in a beverage to this day. And it is worth noting that Shiva was particularly favored by Scythians who dominated Northern India from about 300 B.C. to 300 A.D., who minted gold coins with his image (Bennett, 2010). "Drinking of cannabis in the form of bhang can be traced considerably back in time. The current form follows the tradition of ritual use prescribed for Soma, such as washing, grinding, mixing with milk and spiritual invocation.... The use of bhang by Brahmans and householders at festivals has a form and style that may be traced to Soma..." (Morningstar, 1985).

In *Sadhus – India's Mystic Holy Men*, Dolf Hartsuiker explains more about Shiva's special relationship with cannabis and the development of smoking it:

> ...the smoking of charas [cannabis] is ... regarded as a sacred act ...Intoxication as a "respected" ... method of self-realization is related to Soma the nectar of the gods, which is recommended in the Vedas as a sure means of attaining divine wisdom.
>
> Mythologically, charas, is intimately connected with Shiva: he smokes it, he is perpetually intoxicated by it, he is the Lord of Charas.... Babas offer the smoke to him; they want to take part in his ecstasy, his higher vision of reality (Hartsuiker, 1993).

Cannabis is also given in dedication to Krishna, Kali and other deities by some devotees and is popularly used as a ritual intoxicant in the Festival of Colors and other religious holidays. This Indian ritual use of cannabis has long been noted among the more occult minded. *The Picatrix*, a 10th-century Arabic magical text that was translated into Latin in the 12th-century, and contributed greatly to medieval concepts of magic in Europe, refers to the ritual use of cannabis in India as an influence. "Indian cannabis has so many functions and the Indians use it mostly in their incense mixture that is used in the temples" (Kiesel & Atalla, 2002). As well, the noted 17th-century scientist, alchemist, Rosicrucian and cannabis experimenter Robert Hooke (1635-1703) in a lecture on cannabis given at the Royal Society, commented that: "It is a certain plant which grows very common in India, and the Vertues or Quality thereof, are there very well known ... 'tis commonly made Use of, by the Heathen Priests, or rambling Mendicant Heathen Friars, who will many of the meet together, and every of them dose themselves with this Medicine, and then ramble several Ways, talking they know not what, pretending after that, they were inspired" (Hooke, 1689).

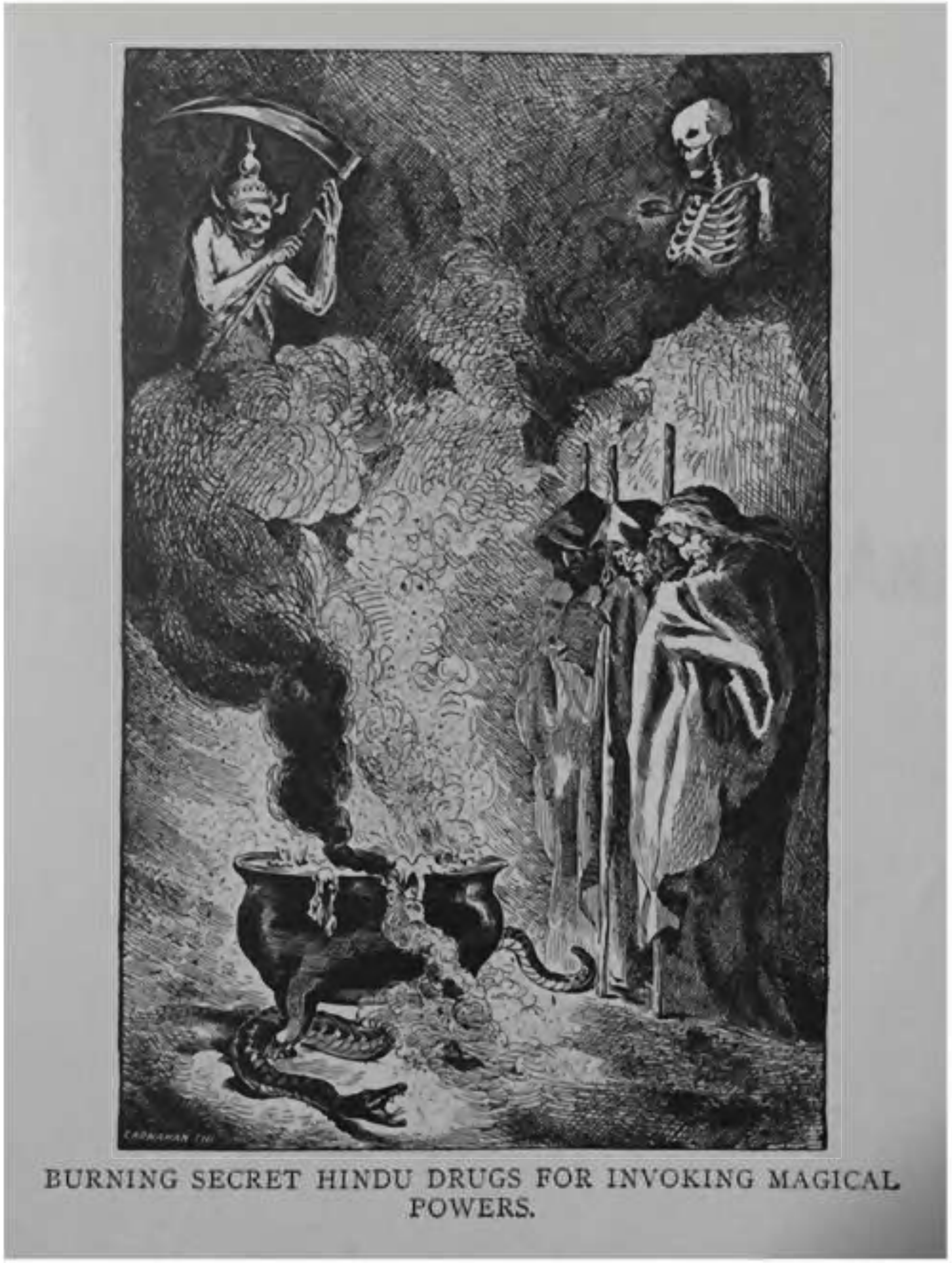
Aleister Crowley wrote of his travels to India, in his essay "The Psychology of Hashish," that certain "Yogis employed hashish ... to obtain Samadhi, that oneness with the Universe, or with Nothingness, which is the feeble expression by which alone we can shadow that supreme trance" (Crowley, 1909). Figures like sadhus, who often lived in funeral grounds, were and are considered shaman-like magical wizards, who held occult powers. As the *Arcana of Nature* recorded in then mid-19th century, "...hashish, or Indian hemp, which the Hindoos used to produce the ecstasy in which they communicated with the gods, and learned the course of future events" (Tuttle, 1864). L.W. de Laurence, who referred to cannabis a number of times in his writings, influenced by such traditions, released *The Great Book of Magical Art, Hindu Magic and Indian Occultism* in 1915.

Indicating the influence on magical practice, an 1889 *Supplement to the Theosophist*, from a correspondent in Bombay, recorded in an article on '"Occult Sciences of Eastern Magi," how, "Phantasms, or the art of producing in the air phantasmal images, is achieved mostly by incantations invariably aided by hashish, or opium, or other drugs, and by fumigations and arrangements of scenery" (Rehatsek, 1889).

Another aspect of Indian mystical and magical tradition, Tantra, particularly its mystical sexual practices, also deeply influenced the Western Occult scene and the development of sex magick. Sir John Woodroffe (1865-1936) used the name Arthur Avalon, when he released his translations of Indian Tantric texts. "While maintaining his public profile as a judge and scholar of British Indian law, Woodroffe was also a private student of the tantras, who published a huge body of texts and translations and thus pioneered the modern academic study of Tantra in the West" (Urban, 2003).

> This is quite important to know, for here we have a writer on an Indian esoteric system taking a name imbued with western esotericism. The name at any rate seems to hint at initiations and the possession of

occult secrets. The Arthurian legends are bound up with the story of the Holy Grail and its quest. This was a symbol of esoteric wisdom, especially to Theosophists who appropriated the legend. Anyone who named himself after King Arthur or the mystic isle of Avalon would be thought to be identifying himself with occultism, in Theosophists' eyes (Taylor, 2001).



BURNING SECRET HINDU DRUGS FOR INVOKING MAGICAL POWERS.

Illustration from de Laurence's The Great Book of Magical Art, Hindu Magic and Indian Occultism, (1915).

This Arthurian/Grail spin was also adopted by the proponents of Sex Magick in the *Ordo Templi Orientis*, of which Crowley was for a time Grandmaster. A Grandmaster of the O.T.O., prior to Crowley, Theodore Reuss, wrote a paper on sex magic, "Parsifal and the Secrets of the Graal Unveiled," in 1914, and made direct reference to Tantric practices and symbolism.

In Tantric sex rites, cannabis was often consumed. Although Shiva is the Lord of Bhang, cannabis appears in offerings to a number of other deities such as those dedicated to Shiva's consort Kali, Goddess of Life and Death. Kali's cannabis mantra is, "Om, Hrim Ambrosia, that springeth forth from ambrosia, Thou shalt showerest ambrosia, draw ambrosia for me again and again. Bring Kalika within my control. Give success; Svaha" (Avalon, 1913). In Tantric rites, cannabis retained its ancient Vedic epithet of 'Vijaya' (Victory). As Arthur Avalon (aka, Sir John Woodroffe) explained: "Vijaya, used in ceremonies to Kali: That is the narcotic Bhang (hemp)... used in all ceremonies" (Avalon, 1913).

> In medieval India and Tibet, sorcerers in search of magic powers glorified the use of a marijuana drink (bhang) ... in Tantric sex ceremonies derived from the ancient Soma cult. A circle of naked men and women is conducting an experiment of the central nervous system. They consecrate a bowl of bhang to Kali, goddess of terror and delight. As the bhang begins to take effect, the worshipers mentally arouse the serpent at the base of the spine, sending waves of energy up to the cortex (Aldrich, 1978).

The Respected Sanskrit scholar and historian, Haraprasad Shastri (1853-1931), believed that "Tantra came from outside India. Most probably it came with the Magi-priests of the Scythians" (Shastri, 1911). As both Soma and cannabis, (whether one and the same or separate) are thought to have come to India via the Scythian or other related Indo-European groups, along with Tantric rites, they may all be components of a much earlier foreign, cultural, religious complex, that was adopted in India, and survived, albeit changed, into modern times.

The Magi

> The Magi appear to have been acquainted with the narcotic properties of opium, hemp, and other substances; and by long fasts, and the administration of these opiates, induced a state of trance or ecstasy, favorable to the conception of visions, and the stimulation of accesses of inspiration. They were accustomed to propitiate the spirits with loud songs and chants, either of triumph or woe, entreaty or indignation.
>
> – J. Maxwell, *Dwellers on the Threshold: Or, Magic and Magicians*, (1865)

The name Magi, from where we get terms like, "magic" and "magician" is generally associated with ancient Zoroastrianism, but there is a Scythian connection here as well. And this relationship comes up in trying to understand what happened to "Haoma" in Persia, where it is still consumed. However, the recipe for Haoma is believed to have changed around the time of the Prophet Zoroaster's reforms.

Of the ingredients found at BMAC, ephedra, opium and cannabis, only the stimulating plant ephedra is known to be used in modern preparations of Haoma. Later Zoroastrian literature has indicated that initially the reformer Zoroaster banned the Haoma cult, for its orgiastic all-night rituals. Although Haoma use later returned to Zoroastrian rituals, and has continued, only ephedra is used. However a number of Zoroastrian texts indicate that Zoroaster himself continued using cannabis, and that it was used in the initiation of certain elite members of the religion, and to attain the mystical visions which deeply influenced their cosmology. The Zoroastrian texts refer to a substance variously known as *bhanga*, or in Pahvlavi as *mang*. Bhanga is still used in Persia to identify cannabis, and the related Indian term bhang is still used as well.

In reference to Zoroastrian expeditions into the world of the afterlife, Shaul Shaked noted that "The preparation of this journey was done ... by administering to the officiant a dose of mang (hemp), mixed with wine" (Shaked, 1999). "Zoroaster is commonly said to have spiked the Haoma with mang, which was probably hashish. It would have prolonged the intoxication and further stimulated the imagination of the drugged man. Of such are the wonders of Heaven" (Oliver, 1994). In the Zoroastrian tale "...the Artak Viraz Namak ... Hell, Purgatory, and Heaven, the rewards bestowed on the good, and the punishment awaiting the sinner are here described in a vision induced by hashish" (Campbell, 2000). Referring to this same account, T.P. van Baaren and Franz Hartman also noted the hero "imbibes an intoxicant composed of wine and hashish and after this his body sleeps for seven days and nights while his soul undertakes the journey" (van Baaren & Hartman,1980). 19th-century author James Francis Katherinus Hewitt also refers to the "enlightening prophet drug Bangha (Cannabis Indica), the Hashish by which the Zoroastrian priests were inspired" (Hewitt, 1901). This was also the view of H.S. Nyberg (1938), and the German Iranist, Geo Widengren (1965), as well as many recent researchers.

Unlike the use of the pre-Zoroastrian Haoma, and its de-natured counterpart after Zoroaster's reforms, which were open to much of the community, the use of bhang/mang in the Zoroastrian period was strictly prohibited from anyone but the most elite members of that society. The secrecy surrounding the use of bhanga/mang is likely largely responsible for much of the confusion surrounding the terms mang and bhanga. In *Quests and Visionary Journeys in Sasanian Iran*, Shaul Shaked notes that the use of mang (which he saw as hemp) for visionary quests, "was not a way open to all":

> It was confined to select individuals, who would have regarded themselves as representative of the community, and who would then reveal to the others what they had been privileged to witness. Even for those people this was not a trivial experience that could be undertaken casually or easily repeated. Such journeys were rare occasions, surrounded by grave risks. The danger lay in the very fact that this was the path trodden by the dead, and would have to be brought back to life. Certain encounters along the way may put the power of endurance of the traveler to the test (Shaked, et al., 1999).

The story has it that Zoroaster wandered the countryside for ten years without winning over the people to his new religious concepts. It was not until he met King Vishtaspa, who converted to Zoroaster's religion after drinking a cup of mang that the Iranian prophet's beliefs began to take hold on a wide scale. "Vishtaspa used hemp (bhang) to obtain ecstasy: while his body lay asleep, his soul traveled to paradise" (Eliade 1978). Vishtaspa's shamanic journey is recorded in *Denkird* 7.4.83-6 and *Pahlavi Rivayat* 48.27-32. In the ninth century text the *Denkird*, which was derived from a lost Avestan source, when Vishtaspa drank bhang "he became stard (unconscious) immediately, and they led his soul to paradise and showed him the value of accepting the Religion":

> To enlighten Vishtasp (and teach him) ... and that he would attain a high post, permanent power, riches and food, Ohrmazd the Creator sent at the same time to the house of Vishtasp the yazat [a lesser divine being] Neryosang with a message urging.... Arthavist to give to drink to Vishtasp the lightened drink that would grant the eye of whomever took it a glimpse at the spiritual world.... And speak to Arthavist: 'Lord Arthavist! Take the nice plate, the nicest of all that have been made ... to take, from us, Hom [Haoma] and mang... (Denkird 7.4.84-86).

Gherardo Gnoli recorded: "bang was ... an ingredient of the 'illuminating drink' ... that allowed Wištāsp to see ... the 'great mystery.' This mang ī wištāspān (Pahlavi Vd. 15.14...) was mixed with hōm (Dēnkard 7.4.85) or wine (Pahlavi Rivayat 47.27). It was an integral part of the ecstatic practice aimed at opening the 'eye of the soul' (gyān čašm....)" (Gnoli, 1979). As Widengren explained:

> Hemp and wine or hemp and Haoma were mixed in the cup that was passed to Vistaspa ... it is said that Neryosang was sent forth to let Vistaspa drink "the eye of the soul" with the view up above to the forms of existence of the heavenly beings, the illuminating potion thanks to which Vistaspa saw the great lucky splendor and mystery. The typical expression gyan casm, "eye of the soul," causes problems here. One could be tempted to replace this expression with "source of life," and this in actual fact is how it was translated, which in a pure formal philological sense is completely possible. However the expression can be explained via two points in the Denkart, where, in regards to the enlightenment, it is stated that it is of two types: on the one hand it consists of a view with the eye of the body, tan casm, on the other hand it is a view with the eye of the soul, gyan casm, which is defined as 'the opening of the eye of the soul to obtain knowledge." "The eye of the soul" means introspection. The visionary sight is conveyed to Kavi Vistaspa using a Haoma potion mixed with hemp. With this his soul can repair to Garodman, [Paradise] to view the heavenly existence (Widengren, 1965).

A similar reference to the "eye" is found in the Indian *Aitareya Brahmanam*, "When ... the Adhvaryu hands over ... the Soma cup to drink ... to the Hotar, he receives it with the ... mantra ... (By the words): 'This is a good which has knowledge; here is a good which has knowledge; in me is a good which has knowledge; ruler of the eye, protect my eye' the Hotar drinks Soma from the Maitravaruna *graha* [ritual cup for Soma]. (Then he repeats): 'The eye with the mind is called hither.'" Martin Haug in his translation of this passage, noted "This formula resembles very much one of the most sacred prayers of the Parsis ... which is particularly repeated when the Zotar priest (the Hotar of the Brahmans) is drinking the Homa (Soma) juice ..." (Haug, 1863). In relation, in India the drinking of bhang, or smoking of ganja by devotees is still believed to open up the "eye" of Shiva, i.e the "third-eye."

However, it would seem after the institution of the Moslem period, when Zoroastrians were either forced out of Persia or forced to convert to Islam, the ritual use of cannabis in the religion declined and eventually seems to have gone underground. Although there is evidence that some use was still in play during the reign of the Sasanian King Khusraw Parvēz (557-628) and in "Azerbaijan, a former center of the Zoroastrian religion and homeland of the cannabis-using Scythians, medieval manuscripts also record the use of wine infused with a mixture of cannabis, opium and henbane" (Dannaway, Piper & Webster, 2007). It is generally viewed that through these channels the use of cannabis was adopted by the more mystical branches of Islam. From what I have seen in the modern day, any mention of the religion's ancient cannabis use by practicing mainstream Zoroastrians is met with disbelief and disdain.

The title, Magi, has been used for over 2,500 years in reference to Zoroastrianism. In the Hellenic period, when the Greeks were assimilating so much of other cultures, traditions, whether accurately or not, the mysterious rites of Zoroastrians, became associated with everything from astrology to necromancy, and the term "magi" began its transition to becoming our modern words "magic," and the practitioners of this, "magicians." This association between "magic" and occult rites and practices was particularly revitalized in the Medieval period, where Zoroaster was often considered the creator of magic. As *Encyclopedia Iranica* has noted:

> Most prominent European scholars of magic of the early modern period devoted at least one brief passage to the supposed inventor of that discipline. Here, it may suffice to mention the names of authors such as Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa of Nettesheim (1486-1535), Giordano Bruno (1548-1600), Giambattista Della Porta (ca. 1535-1615), Jean Bodin (1530-96), Gabriel Naudé (1600-53), and Eliphas Lévi (1810-75). ... [T]hese authors ... were in favor of a "pure," or "natural," version of magic that was carefully distinguished from its "demonic" branch. Correspondingly, Zoroaster came to be regarded as a wise man, who would know about the secrets of nature and heaven (Stausberg, 2005).

Zoroaster also appears frequently in the writings of later occultists, such as Blavatsky, Paschal Beverly Randolph, Crowley, and others. A number of times in his writings, Crowley borrowed a phrase from *The Chaldean Oracles of Zoroaster*."The girders of the Soul, which give her breathing, are easy to be unloosed" (Westcott, 1895) in reference to the effects of cannabis resin; "Perhaps hashish is the drug which 'loosens the girders of the soul.'" (Crowley, 1909).

It should also be noted that the inner voyages of these Zoroastrian psychonauts are believed to have influenced both Jewish and Christian cosmologies, with their voyages to Heaven and Hell, as well as tales of an Apocalyptic-like end times. The Zoroastrian cosmological influence in this respect has long been noted. Considering the strong connections between the Zoroastrians and Scythians already discussed, along with the latter's high mobility, it is not so surprising that their influence can be felt as well.

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[1] It is worth mentioning that Eliade's conclusions here, may have drawn from his own personal experience. As a young man in India, in 1931, he experimented with both opium and bhang (cannabis). "Once I smoked bhang and I recall that I had a vertiginous night, for the sense of space had shifted and I felt so light that whenever I wanted to turn on one side, I would fall from the bed. [...] [The plant] bhang has a curious quality to focus and to deepen the thought, any thought that dominates consciousness at the moment of intoxication. Certainly, if it is a religious thought 'as it is assumed to be' the meditation is a perfect one. I remember, nonetheless, that I had had that evening a literary discussion with a visitor of the ashram and that night was for me riddled with nightmares [...]"(Eliade, 1931/1991) As quoted in (Oisteanu, 2007)

"In March 1924, at the age of only 17 years, Mircea Eliade published (under the pseudonym Silviu Nicoară) a courageous article, 'The Artists and the Hashish', explaining in it why many artists and writers (Gérard de Nerval, Alexandre Dumas-Père, Theophile Gauthier, Charles Baudelaire etc. [all of whom shall be discussed in Chapter 22] have used the intoxication with hashish: in order to enhance their intellectual creativity and mobility. 'Taken in infinitesimal quantity' – wrote the adolescent Eliade, quoting Charles Richet –, '[the hashish] unfreezes the mind making it proper for things hard to understand and gives it also an amazing continuity of ideas.' The adolescent Eliade concluded that, taken in big doses, the hashish induces ecstatic states: 'In that moment the soul leaves the body and you feel that you are immersing into ether' ('Ziarul ştiinţelor populare' [The Journal of Popular Sciences], no. 12, 18th of March 1924, p. 172)" (Ostineau, 2007).

CHAPTER 2

Kaneh Bosm: Cannabis in the Bible?

Prophets practiced ecstasy states and may have used incense and narcotics to produce impressive effects.... The Israelite prophets ... acted as mediums. In a state of trance or frenzy they related their divine visions in a sing-song chant, at times a scream. These states could be induced by music.... But the prophets also used, and sometimes abused, incense, narcotics and alcohol...

– Paul Johnson, A *History of the Jews*

The idea that the Old Testament prophets may have been using psychoactive substances in order to attain a shamanic trance in which the revelations of Yahweh could be received, is as troubling for modern day believers as Charles Darwin's Theory of Evolution was to their 19th-century counterparts – just as Darwin's theory of evolution challenged the myths of creation from the Book of Genesis, this entheogenic origin for the Jewish religion, indicates a scientifically and anthropologically based theory on the origins of the Bible itself through shamanism and psychoactive plants. As Professor Georg Luck has noted "The idea that Moses himself and the priests who succeeded him relied on 'chemical aids' in order to touch with the Lord must be disturbing or repugnant to many. It seems to degrade religion – any religion – when one associates it with shamanic practices..."(Luck, 1985/2006). Luck experienced these reactions himself, when his decades of research into magic rites in the ancient world drew him to such a hypothesis. "As I was doing research on psychoactive substances used in magic and religion and magic in antiquity, I happened to come across chapter 30 in the Book of Exodus where Moses prescribes the composition of sacred incense and anointing oil. It occurred to me , judging from the ingredients, that ... [these] substances might act as 'entheogens,' the incense more powerful than the oil"(Luck, 1985/2006).

Professor Luck pointed to the alleged mild psychoactive effects of myrrh and particularly frankincense, as has been suggested by a number of recent studies (Drahl, 2008; Khan, 2012). Frankincense contains trahydrocannabinol, which is similar in molecular structure to tetrahydrocannabinol, the psychoactive component of cannabis. And it has been suggested that even in modern church rituals, the mild mood-elevating effects of this may help to create a religious state of mind in parishioners close enough to inhale its effects. However, this alleged effect has been hard to reproduce in any notable way under clinic conditions. Luck noted this, explaining that "No two kinds of frankincense ... have exactly the same effect. There are many varieties, coming from different regions along the ancient incense route, and some of the more potent ones may not be available any more. The blends used in churches today, seem rather mild, if they can be called psychoactive at all" (Luck, 1985/2006).

What Luck and Johnson both seem to have been unaware of in their comments about the shamanic nature of the Israeli prophets and their potential use of psychoactive substances, is the evidence indicating a role for cannabis amongst the ancient Jews in this exact context.

Although there have been a variety of suggestions regarding references to cannabis in scripture, which I have explored elsewhere, the most convincing evidence for cannabis in the Bible comes via the Polish Anthropologist Sula Benet's etymological investigations into the Hebrew word "kaneh bosm." In her essays "Tracing One Word Through Different Languages" (1936) and "Early Diffusions and Folk Uses of Hemp" (1975), Benet demonstrated that the Hebrew terms "kaneh" and "kaneh bosm" (also translated "qaneh," and "qaneh bosm") identified cannabis, by tracing the modern term back through history, noting the similarities with the later *Mishna* term for cannabis, kanabos, as well as comparing it to the ancient Assyrian word kunubu (also translated qunubu) which has long been regarded as identifying cannabis, and which was used in an almost identical ritual context as kaneh bosm was by the ancient Jews. The root "kaneh" in this construction means "cane-reed" or "hemp," while "bosm" means "aromatic." This word appeared in Exodus 30:23, whereas in the Song of Songs 4:14, Isaiah 43:24, Jeremiah 6:20, Ezekiel 27:19 the term keneh (or q'aneh) is used without the adjunct bosem. As Sula Benet has explained, the Hebrew word kaneh-bosm was later mistranslated as calamus, a common marsh plant with little monetary value that does not have the qualities or value ascribed to kanehbosm. This error occurred in the oldest of the Greek translation of the Hebrew texts, the Septuagint in the third century B.C., and then repeated in following translations.

As Prof. Carl Ruck, of Boston University explains:

> Cannabis is called kaneh bosem in Hebrew, which is now recognized as the Scythian word that Herodotus wrote as kannabis (or cannabis). The translators of the bible translate this usually as "fragrant cane," i.e., an aromatic grass. Once the word is correctly translated, the use of cannabis in the bible is clear. Large amounts of it were compounded into the ointment for the ordination of the priest. This ointment ... was also used to fumigate the holy enclosed space. The ointment (absorbed through the skin) and the fragrance of the vessels (both absorbed by handling and inhaled as perfume) and the smoke of the incense in the confined space would have been a very effective means of administering the psychoactive properties of the plant. Since it was only the High Priest who entered the Tabernacle, it was an experience reserved for him... (Ruck, 2009).

Noted cannabinoid researcher and historian, Dr. Ethan Russo, also notes:"I think it is absolutely clear that cannabis was in the Holy Land, we have archaeological proof dated to the 4th century [A.D.] there was this carbonized fragment of cannabis that was found in a cave at Bet Shemesh in Israel. Additionally, I firmly believe that kaneh bosm in the Hebrew was cannabis, so I am absolutely convinced it was there ... its mentioned in Exodus that kaneh bosm was part of the Holy Anointing Oil, also used as an incense and it really makes sense" (Russo, 2003). As Ruck and co-authors have noted the term "occurs also in Song of Songs 4:14, where it grows in an orchard of exotic fruits, herbs, and spices.... It occurs also in Isaiah 43:24 where Yahweh lists amongst the slights received in sacrifice, the insufficient offerings of kaneh bosm; and Jeremiah 6:20, where Yahweh, displeased with his people, rejects such an offering; and Ezekiel 27:19, where it occurs in a catalogue of the luxurious items in the import trade of Tyre.... This conclusion has since been affirmed by other scholars. It is ironic that calamus "sweet flag," the substitute for the alleged cannabis, is itself a known hallucinogen for which TMA-2 is derived" (Ruck et. al., 2001).

Kaneh bosm is cognately similar-sounding to the Assyrian name for cannabis, qunubu. And this connection is taken further by the identical use of qunubu incenses and ointments for spiritual purposes, to that of the Holy Oil and Incenses of the Old Testament Jews and kaneh bosm.

Recipes for cannabis(qunubu) incense, regarded as copies of much older versions, were found in the cuneiform library of the legendary Assyrian King Assurbanipal

(b. 685-ca. 627 B.C., reigned 669-ca. 631 B.C.). Cannabis was not only sifted for incense like modern hashish, but the active properties were also extracted into oils. "Translating 'Letters and Contracts, no.162' (Keiser, 1921), qu-un-na-pu is noted among a list of spices (Scheil, 1921)(p. 13), and would be translated from French (EBR), '(qunnapu): oil of hemp; hashish'" (Russo, 2005). In Babylonian religious rites, "inspiration was derived by burning incense, which, if we follow evidence obtained elsewhere, induced a prophetic trance. The gods were also invoked by incense" (Mackenzie, 1915). Records from the time of Assurbanipal's father Esarhaddon indentify cannabis, (qunubu) as one of the main ingredients of the "sacred rites." In a letter written in 680 B.C. to the mother of the Assyrian king, Esarhaddon, reference is made to qu-nu-bu. In response to Esarhaddon's mother's question as to "What is used in the sacred rites," a high priest responded that "the main items ... for the rites are fine oil, water, honey, odorous plants (and) hemp [qunubu]" (Waterman, 1936).

Cannabis was clearly an important ritual implement from early on in Mesopotamia. Professor George Hackman referred to 4,000 year old inscriptions indicating cannabis in *Temple Documents of the Third Dynasty of Ur From Umma*, which described a "Memoranda of three regular offerings of hemp" (Hackman, 1937). Evidence indicates that in ancient Mesopotamia cannabis was also ingested in foods for ritual purposes as well as consumed in beverages, akin to the Haoma/Soma preparations and also rubbed on topically (Bennett, 2010).

As the 19th century scholar Francois Lenormant noted in *Le Magie chez les Chaldean*: "The Chaldean Magus used artificial means, intoxicating drugs for instance, in order to attain to [a] state of excitement, acts of purification and mysterious rituals increased the power of the incantations. Among these mysterious rituals must be counted the use of enchanted potions which undoubtedly contained drugs that were medically effective" (Lenormant 1874).

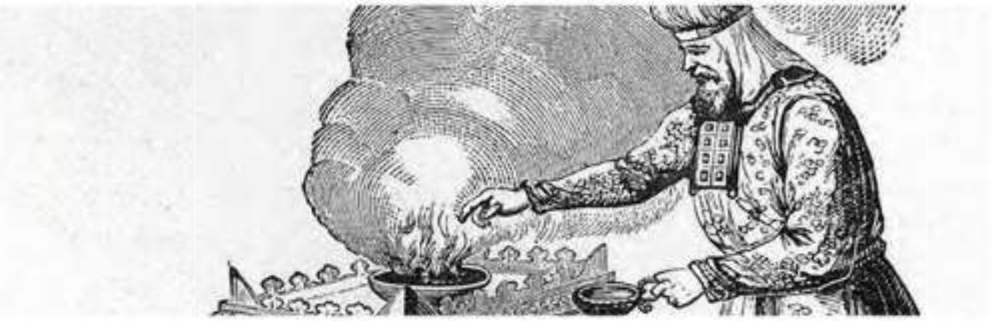
An Assyrian medical tablet from the Louvre collection has been transliterated: "So that god of man and man should be in good rapport: ...with hellebore, cannabis and lupine you will rub him," (Russo 2005). Similar topical preparations containing cannabis, as shall be discussed later, occur in the 16th century *Sepher Raziel/Liber Salomonis* and other grimoires, and were also employed by later occultists like L.A. Cahagnet, and P.B. Randolph along with others. Other cross-cultural references to such topical preparations of cannabis have been identified (Bennett & McQueen, 2001; Bennett, 2006).

Health Canada has done scientific tests that show transdermal absorption of THC can take place. The skin is the biggest organ of the body, so of course considerably more cannabis is needed to be effective in this way, much more than when ingested or smoked. The people who used the Holy Oil literally drenched themselves in it.

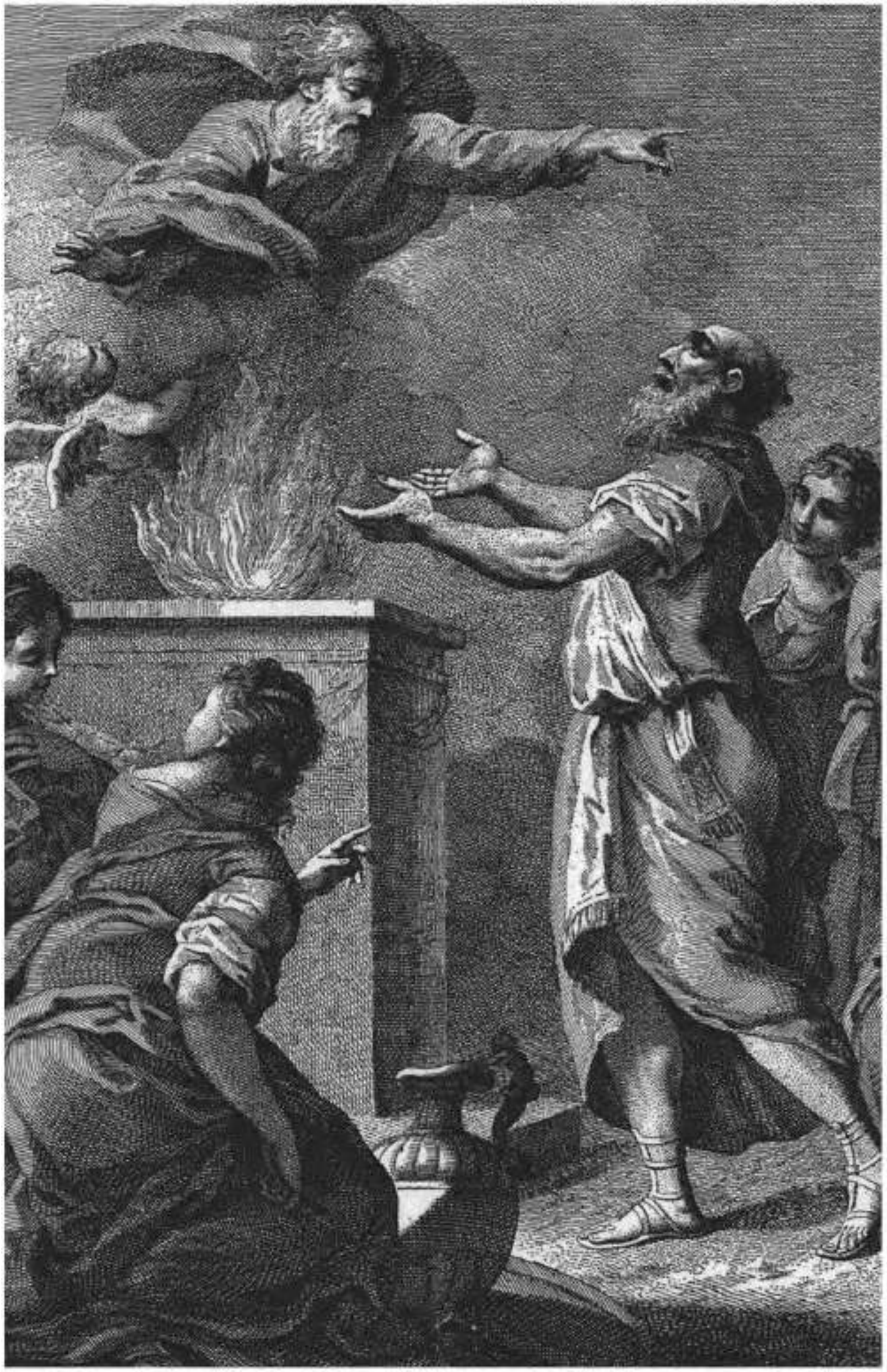
Based upon a 25mg/g oil Health Canada found skin penetration of THC (33%). "The high concentration of THC outside the skin encourages penetration, which is a function of the difference between outside and inside (where the concentration is essentially zero)." Health Canada, who was concerned about people getting high off of hemp body products, concluded that, even with THC content limited to 10 ppm, "inadequate margins of safety exist between potential exposure and adverse effect levels for cannabinoids in cosmetics, food, and nutraceutical products made from industrial hemp" (Health Canada, 2001).[1] I talked to Dr. James Geiwitz personally at a conference shortly after this study was published, and he told me that he felt this offered strong evidence for the potential psychoactive effects of the Holy Oil.

Only those who had been "dedicated by the anointing oil of ... God" (Leviticus 21:12) were permitted to act as priests. In the "holy" state produced by the anointing oil the priests were forbidden to leave the sanctuary precincts (Leviticus 21:12), and the above passage from Exodus makes quite clear the sacredness of this ointment, the use of which the priests jealously guarded. These rules were likely made so that other tribal members would not find out the secret behind Moses, and the priesthood's new found shamanistic revelations. Or even worse, take it upon themselves to make a similar preparation – an event that would likely lead to Moses and his fellow Levites losing their authority over their ancient tribal counterparts. Those who broke this strong tribal taboo risked the penalty of being "cut off from their people," a virtual death-sentence in the savage ancient world. Secrets revealed equals power lost is a rule of thumb that is common to shamans and magicians worldwide, and the ancient Hebrew shamans guarded their secrets as fiercely as any. "The words spoken by the Lord to Moses ... 'where I shall meet with you,' should be taken in the strictest literal sense. God will appear to the priest who uses the substance in the proper way. But the sanctions against any frivolous, casual use is formidable.... By its nature, an 'entheogen' is surrounded by taboos, because it gives access to the deity, and the tremendous power it transmutes must be controlled" (Luck, 1985/2006).

Moreover, this Holy Oil was to be used specifically in the Tent of the Meeting, where the angel of the Lord would "speak" to Moses from a pillar of smoke over the altar. From what can be understood by the descriptions in Exodus, Moses and later High Priests would cover themselves with this ointment and also pour some on the altar of incense before burning it and during the ritual. "Besides its role in anointing, the Holy Oil of the Hebrews was burned as incense, and its use was reserved to the priestly class" (Russo, 2007).



Esarhaddon standing by curtained tent, a Scythian tent, and the Tent of Meeting



In the Torah, the pillar of smoke that arose before Moses in the "Tent of the Meeting," is referred to as the

"Shekinah" and is identified as the physical evidence of the Lord's presence. None of the other Hebrews in the Exodus account either see or hear the Lord, they only know that Moses is talking to the Lord when the smoke is pouring forth from the Tent of the Meeting. It is hard not to see all the classical elements of shamanism at play in this description of Moses' encounter with God, and like Zoroaster, Moses can be seen as an ecstatic shamanic figure who used cannabis as a means of seeking celestial advice. Such techniques of invocation certainly occur in later magical practices.

The "Magician" Moses scryed his messages from the Lord in an act of Biblical capnomancy, and this was a traditional use of cannabis in magical rituals that has been carried on into modern times. As Ernest Bosc De Veze, who also wrote a "Treatise on Hashish," noted in *Petite Encyclopedie Synthetique des Sciences Occultes*, in reference to "capnomancy ... for divination ... the smoke obtained from psychic plants such as verbena, hashish or Indian hemp ... [are] used" (Bosc, 1904). In cases like this, not only was there the psychoactive effect of the smoke used, but the smoke provided the partially material basis in which the invoked entity or vision might be viewed. "The magician ... burned aromatic substances and anointed his/her body with perfumed ointments. The whole set-up for an epiphany was there: now all that was necessary was for the deity to appear" (Brashear, 1991).

> ...[T]he smoke itself was the epiphany. The smoke was inhaled by the magician and his client, and the vision came in trance. The smell of psychoactive substances ... acts on the human brain in a very quick, very predictable way.
>
> ...[T]he inhalation of the sacred incense could create a powerful vision of the deity in the priest. Other factors were probably involved too, the smell of the Holy Oil with which the priest, the altar, and other sacred objects within the temple were anointed, the golden surface of the altar that reflected the shine of lamps.... The shiny surfaces, reflecting the sacral lamps nearby, could help induce trance in the priest as he was breathing smoke (Luck, 1985/2006).

Just as Moses received his answers in a billowing cloud of cannabis resin-infused smoke, we can see from a reference in Isaiah, that when the cannabis was lacking, the scryed answers were more difficult to bring forth! The Lord complains he has been shortchanged his offering of cannabis. When the prophet seeks advice the Lord complains:"Thou hast bought me aromatic cane (kaneh) with money, neither hast thou filled me with the fat of thy sacrifices: but thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities."

Other textual evidence from Isaiah, although not identifying cannabis by name, gives clear indications that at times the Lord's hunger for his favorite smoke was being appeased and hemp was being used as a shamanic incense inside the precincts of the temple, in elaborate shamanic ceremonies:

> And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the temple was filled with smoke.
>
> Then said I, "Woe is me, for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts."
>
> Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar, And he laid it upon my mouth and said, "Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged" (Isaiah 6:4-7).

Those of us who are familiar with hashish know that it burns in a similar way to both incense and coal and it's not hard to imagine an elaborately dressed ancient shaman, with a mask and fabricated wings, lifting a burning coal of hashish, or pressed bud, to the lips of the ancient prophet Isaiah. Interestingly, the holder of the tongs is described as a "seraphim," which translates as a "fiery-serpent," and has been associated with the "Nehushtan" that Moses made and King Hezekiah later destroyed during his own religious reforms, because the Israelites were burning incense to it inside the temple itself.

Kaneh, (cannabis) can also be found in what is the most beautiful piece of prose in the whole Bible, Solomon's Song of Songs 4.14, where it grows in an orchard of exotic fruits, herbs, and spices:

> Come with me from Lebanon, my bride, come with me from Lebanon.... How much more pleasing is your love than wine, and the fragrance of your ointment than any spice!... The fragrance of your garments is like that of Lebanon.... Your plants are an orchard of pomegranates with choice fruits, with henna and nard, nard and saffron, kaneh [cannabis] and cinnamon, with every kind of incense tree... (Song of Songs 4:8-14).

Solomon has often been associated with magic, and this is particularly true of medieval European magical traditions where grimoires like, *Clavicula Salomonis* (The Key of Solomon 14th-15th century) and the 17th-century *Clavicula Salomonis Regis*, (The Lesser Key of Solomon) both of which represent a typical example of Renaissance magic. Most interesting of such magical manuscripts, is the 16th century *Sepher Raziel: Liber Salomonis*, which will be discussed in chapter 15.

However, Solomon's reputation for magic, goes back much further than this. The *Testament of Solomon*, thought to date from sometime between the first and third century

A.D., is one of the oldest magical texts concerning the ancient Jewish king. This text is a pseudepigraphic catalog of demons summoned by King Solomon, and how they can be countered by invoking angels and other magical techniques. The *Testament of Solomon* refers to a story where the magician-king forces a demon to spin hemp. "So I commanded her to spin the hemp for the ropes used in the building of the house of God; and accordingly, when I had sealed and bound her, she was so overcome and brought to naught as to stand night and day spinning the hemp" (*The Testament of Solomon*, 100-300 A.D.).

Ingested cannabis references have also been long suggested, such as in a 1903 essay, "Indications of the Hachish-Vice in the Old Testament," Dr. Creighton, referred to accounts in the books of Daniel, Samuel, and particularly Ezekiel in this regard. "'Son of man, eat what is before you, eat this scroll; then go and speak to the house of Israel.' So I opened my mouth and he gave me the scroll to eat.... So I ate it, and it tasted as sweet as honey in my mouth.... Then the Spirit lifted me up, and I heard behind me a loud rumbling sound – May the glory of the Lord be praised in his dwelling-place! – the sound of the wings of the living creatures brushing against each other and the sound of the wheels beside them, a loud rumbling sound. The Spirit then lifted me up and took me away... "(Ezekiel 3:4-14).

Others have suggested that the important Biblical and Apocrypha figure Ezra consumed a cannabis-infused wine. Ezra, also referred to as Esdras, was a key figure of the Jewish monotheistic reformation after the Persians had returned them to their homeland. Interestingly, at least two researchers, living more than a century apart and from different parts of the world, have concluded that Ezra received his inspiration for this act from the same source of inspiration as his Zoroastrian overlords did ... a cannabis infused wine! Here is Ezra's own account of this. Ezra told the people not to seek him for forty days, and he left for the desert, taking with him five people who were to act as his scribes:

> The next day, behold a voice cried to me saying. Esdras open thy mouth, and drink what I give you thee to drink! Then opened I my mouth, and behold, he reached me a full cup, which is full as it were with water, but the color of it was like fire. I took it, and drank: and when I had drunk of it, my heart uttered understanding, and wisdom grew in my breast, for my spirit strengthened and my memory; and my mouth was opened and shut no more: and they sat forty days, and they wrote in the day, and at night they ate bread. As for me, I spake by the day, and I held not my tongue by the night. In forty days they wrote two hundred and four books (2 Esdras 14:38-44).

As George W. Brown recorded of this more than a century ago:

> A voice bid him open his mouth, he – the voice, of course – reached Esdras a full cup. It would be interesting to know whose voice it was which possessed such unnatural powers; yet we apprehend the reader is much more anxious to know the contents of the cup ... which possessed such wondrous ability, probably the same possessed by the "fruit of the tree" which grew "in the midst of the garden," the eating of which opened the eyes of our first parents, and enabled them to see "as Gods knowing good and evil." We think we can furnish this desired information, to do which we are compelled to anticipate some facts existing among Zoroastrian worshipers; many centuries before the date religionists ascribe to Abraham, and which was practiced in Persia, Assyria and Babylonia at the very time Ezra was writing Jewish history under the influence of the "fiery cup."
>
> Among other duties required on occasional sacrifices of animals to Ahura-Mazda, additional to prayers, praises, thanksgiving, and the recitation of hymns, was the performance ... of a curious ceremony known as that of the Haoma or Homa. This consisted of the extraction of the juice of the Homa plant by the priests during the recitation of prayers, the formal presentation of the liquid extracted to the sacrificial fire ... the consumption of a small portion of it by one of the officiating ministers, and the division of the remainder among the worshipers...
>
> What was the Haoma or Homa, the production of the moon-plant, growing in those regions of Asia to far north for the successful growing of the grape, and yet yielding such intoxicating properties? It is known in the medical books as Apocynum Cannabinum, and belongs to the Indian Hemp family, Cannabis Indica being an official preparation from it. It is now known in India as bhang, and is popularly known with us as hashish, the stimulating and intoxicating effects of which are well known to physicians (Brown, 1890).

More than a century after Brown, Vicente Dobroruka also noted a comparison between the Persian technique of shamanic ecstasy and that of Ezra, in his essay "Preparation for Visions in Second Temple Jewish Apocalyptic Literature": "Similar drinks appear in Persian literature ... Vishtapa has an experience quite equivalent in the Dinkard ... where mention is made to a mixture of wine (or Haoma) and hemp with henbane.... *The Book of Arda Viraz* also mentions visions obtained from wine mixed with hemp, and for the preparations of the seer..." (Dobroruka, 2002).

Dobroruka revisited this theme in more detail in his later 2006 article, "Chemically-induced visions in the Fourth Book of Ezra in light of comparative Persian material," and again draws direct comparisons between Ezra's cup of fire, and the mang-mixed infused-beverages of the Zoroastrian psychonauts. Interestingly, Rabbi Immanuel Löw, referred to a ancient Jewish recipe (Sabb. 14. 3 ed. Urbach, 9th-11th century) that called for wine to be mixed with ground-up saffron, Arabic gum and hasisat surur, "I know 'surur' solely as a alias for the resin the Cannabis sativa," (Löw, 1924).

Löw made no comment on the word "hasisat" which is very reminiscent of the name for cannabis resins in the medieval Arabic world "hasis" (hashish), and the term is generally thought to have been derived in that period. However, the 19th-century scholar John Kitto also put forth two different potential Hebrew word candidates for the origins of the term "hashish" in *A Cyclopaedia of Biblical Literature*. Kitto pointed to the Hebrew terms Shesh, which originates in reference to some sort of "fibre plant," and the possibly related word, Eshishah (E-shesh-ah?) which holds a wide variety of somewhat contradictory translations such as "flagon" "sweet cakes," "syrup," and also "unguent." This last reference is interesting in relation to what we have already seen in regards to the cannabis infused Holy Oil, which was basically an unguent. According to Kitto, this Eshishah was mixed with wine. "Hebrew eshishah ... is by others called hashish ... this substance, in course of time, was converted into a medium of intoxication by means of drugs" (Kitto 1845/1856). With the cognate pronunciation similarities found between the Hebrew Shesh and Eshishah one can only speculate on the possibility of two ancient Hebrew references to one plant that held both fibrous and intoxicating properties. It seems likely that what is referred to is hashish resin, with the addition of the word "surur" indicating the possibility of hashish oil, (which the Arabs prepared by boiling the tops of the plant, and collecting the drops of oil that formed on top of the water). A very potent preparation. "The palm wine of the East ... is made intoxicating ... by an admixture of stupefying ingredients, of which there was an abundance.... Such a practice seems to have existed amongst the ancient Jews..." (Kitto, 1861).

Talmudic reference indicate this use as well: "The one on his way to execution was given a piece of incense in a cup of wine, to help him fall asleep" (Sanh. 43a). Such preparations were used by the ancient Jews, for ritual intoxication, and for easing pain. A Reverend E.A. Lawrence, in an essay on "The Wine of the Bible" in a 19th century edition of *The Princeton Review* noted that:

> It appears to have been an ancient custom to give medicated or drugged wine to criminals condemned to death, to blunt their senses, and so lessen the pains of execution. To this custom there is supposed

> to be an allusion, Prov. xxxi. 6, "Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish."... To the same custom some suppose there is a reference in Amos 8, where the '"wine of the condemned" is spoken of.... The wicked here described, in addition to other evil practices, imposed unjust fines upon the innocent, and spent the money thus unjustly obtained upon wine, which they quaffed in the house of their gods...
>
> Mixed wine is often spoken of in Scripture. This was of different kinds ... sometimes, by lovers of strong drink, with spices of various kinds, to give it a richer flavor and greater potency (Is. v. 22; Ps. lxxv. 8). The "royal wine," literally wine of the kingdom ... Esther i. 7), denotes most probably the best wine, such as the king of Persia himself was accustomed to drink (Lawrence, 1871).

Thus, this infused wine not only had pain numbing qualities, but was also "quaffed in the house of their gods," giving clear indication it was sought after for entheogenic effects as well. That it is compared to the wines of the King of Persia, also brings us back to the cannabis infused wines of the Zoroastrian period, such as that taken by King Vishtaspa. In reference to "unguents" such as the Holy Oil, placing "incense" into wine, we are reminded of the cannabis-infused incenses and anointing oils referred to earlier, indicating these substances may have come to be placed directly into wine. In regard to myrrhed wine, it is worth noting that Dr. David Hillman, who holds combined degrees in Classics and Bacteriology, has suggested that ancient myrrh was often doctored with cannabis resins: "The [ancient] Arabs ... will take the rub, basically the hashish ... they adulterate it with myrrh, so you end up with these combinations of plants that actually end up together ... myrrh and cannabis, you see them associated ... often" (Hillman, 2015).

Christian period

In the early Christian period, as has been detailed elsewhere (Bennett & McQueen, 2001; Bennett, 2010), many of the elements of the early Judaic use seem to have been continued, albeit with some changes. The very term "Christ" is derived from the Greek "Khristos," and had the same meaning as the Hebrew word "Messiah," and these translated literally into English would refer to the "Anointed," a term that makes reference to the anointing oil of Exodus 30:23, which contained Kaneh Bosm – cannabis.

It is worth noting in this context, that Jesus baptized no one in the New Testament account, but instead, in the oldest of the synoptic gospels, Jesus sent out the Apostles with Holy Oil, "And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them" (Mark 6:13). This passage shows us two things, that Jesus was ignoring the rules about the anointing oil of previous times, that limited its use to priests, and then later kings (Exodus 30:33), and that the Holy Oil was being used for medical purposes. Diseases like epilepsy were considered demonic possession up until the medieval ages, and in our day, cannabis has been shown effective in treating severe forms of epilepsy, that even pharmaceutical drugs have been unable to remedy safely. Many of the other healing medical miracles, described in the New Testament, as well, seem to be ailments which have been effectively treated with medical marijuana, skin diseases, stiffened limbs, uterine problems, etc., both before the time of Jesus, and now. Considering that the Gospels themselves are thought to have been first recorded years after the time of Jesus himself, it seems plausible that the New Testament miracles may be fanciful versions, embellished through time, imagination and retelling passed down by word of mouth, of actual medical treatments. As prepostrerous as this may appear, this hypothesis has received international attention in the media (BBC, *Guardian*, *Washington Post, London Times*, 2003, *Vice* 2013).

The New Testament gives us some evidence that this same Holy Oil may have been used for enthoegenic purposes. "[Y]ou have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know the truth ... the anointing you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit – just as it has taught you, remain in him." (1 John 2:27). Through this open distribution the singular Christ, "the Anointed," was extended to become the plural term "Christians," that is, those who had been smeared or anointed.

Although there is some evidence of Jesus' use of this Judaic cannabis oil in the traditional New Testament, we get a clearer picture of its importance when we also look at surviving Christian Gnostic documents. For the first four-hundred years after Jesus' birth, the term "Christian" was used to describe a wide variety of sects and a large volume of different documents. Through the acceptance of one of the more ascetic branches of Christianity by the Roman ruling class, Christianity eventually became the state religion of its former persecutors. In an effort to unify the faith into a controllable mass, the newly formed Roman Catholic Church held a number of councils. These councils prohibited not only pagans, but also differing Christian sects, and in the 4th century edited a wealth of Christian literature down to the few meager documents which have survived as the modern New Testament.

The term Gnostic, meaning "knowledge," is a blanket term that refers to a variety of early Christian sects which had extremely different beliefs about both Jesus and his teachings than those which have come down to us through modern Christianity and the New Testament. From sect to sect, there was some variation to Gnostic belief, although there are some wider commonalities. Some of the more common themes in Gnosticism include the belief that, the "creator god," Ialdabaoth, identified with the god of the Jews, Yahweh, is seen as a demonic entity responsible for the entrapment of Light into matter, through the creation of the material world. Gnostic theology concerns the redemption of this Light back to the original Kingdom of Light from which it first emanated. In the Gnostic view the King, or Kingdom of Light, existed in the place from where the created Universe began, which they located somewhere beyond the seven planetary spheres. Each of the planetary spheres was believed by the Gnostics to be the personification of one of seven evil archons, created by Ialdabaoth as helpers who aided him by contributing a seal that further entrapped light into matter. The final result of this entrapment, was the created world; i.e. – Earth, and humanity. Through Gnosis, i.e. "knowledge," the light entrapped in man could be redeemed back to the original Kingdom of Light from whence it came. (The Gnostic seven planetary archons seem identical in many respects to the planetary sephiroth of the Jewish Kabbalah, and likely this later tradition, developed out of Jewish Gnostic cults). As a Mandean Gnostic prayer recorded of these beliefs:

> From the place of light have I gone forth,
> from the bright habitation...
> An Uthra [angel] from the house of Life accompanied me.
> The Uthra ... held a staff of living water in his hand.
> The staff which he held in his hand
> was full of leaves of an excellent kind.
> He offered me of its leaves,
> and prayers and rituals sprang complete from it.
> Again he offered me of them,

and my sick heart found healing
and my alien soul relief.
A third time he offered me of them,
and he turned upwards the eyes in my head
so that I beheld my Father and knew him...
I asked him for smooth paths
to ascend and behold the place of light.[2]

In an attempt to save their manuscripts from the editorial flames of the Roman Catholic Church, certain Christians, now considered Gnostic heretics, hid copies of their scrolls in caves. One of these ancient hiding places was rediscovered in upper Egypt in 1945 and the large collection of early Christian documents was named the Nag Hammadi Library, after the Egyptian area where it was found. Prior to this discovery, what little was known of the Gnostics came from a few fragmentary texts that had made it down through the centuries in private hands, and the many polemics written against them by the founders of the Catholic Church.

There is no reason to consider these ancient Gnostic documents as less accurate portrayals of the life and teachings of Jesus than the New Testament accounts. In a sense, the rediscovery of the Nag Hammadi Library marks the resurrection of a more historical Jesus, an ecstatic rebel sage who preached enlightenment through rituals involving magical plants, and who is more analogous to the archetypal magician, than the pious ascetic and crucified savior that has come down to us through the Bible's New Testament.

It should also be noted that the Gnostics themselves may have played some role in history's void of knowledge about their practices. The Gnostics were known for openly lying during the early Roman persecutions of Christians, often denying their faith and telling their persecutors exactly whatever they wanted to hear, and then going back to business as usual after the Romans had left. The practice of "intellectual reservation" (*reservatio mentalis*), meaning the concealment of their faith from persecutors, was a well known technique of the secretive Gnostics, and as a means of survival, similar practices were later used by alchemists and occultists to conceal their own activities from the prying eyes of the Inquisition.

In his book, *Against Heresies* (*Adversus Haereses*), pivotal in the identification and reasons for suppression of the Gnostic sects, the early Church father and apologist Irenaeus, (130-200 A.D.) later named a Catholic saint, discussed the Gnostic texts which referred to the anointing rite, and accused the Gnostics of initiating with "secret sacraments," stating that they were written in an archaic manner "to baffle even more those who are being initiated." The Naasenes particularly referred to the anointing oil as an "ineffable chrism," meaning that it was so secret it was not to be fully expressed in words. This leaves little wonder why anointing fell by the wayside in Catholicism, and was replaced with water baptism. From information garnered by both their critics and the Gnostic texts themselves, we can see water baptism versus the rite of anointing, was one of the main points of contention that divided early Christianity, into what was to become the Catholic Church and the Gnostic sects.

The "Gnostic Gospel of Philip" makes direct reference to how the Holy Oil "healed the wounds," and not surprisingly we find that cannabis was used in salves and ointments for burns and wounds throughout the middle-ages. Cannabis resin was also used for other topical applications, especially in relieving the pain of worn and crippled joints. The "Acts of Thomas" specifically states "Thou Holy Oil given unto us for sanctification ... thou art the straightener of the crooked limbs." This medicinal quality of cannabis oil could account for the miraculous healing of cripples attributed to Jesus and his disciples.

One ancient Christian text, "The Acts of Peter and the Twelve Apostles," which is older than the finalized New Testament, estimated to have been recorded in the second century A.D., has Jesus giving the disciples an "unguent box" and a "pouch full of medicine" with instructions for them to go into the city and heal the sick. Jesus explains that you must heal "the bodies first" before you can "heal the heart."

Moreover, we know for a fact that cannabis was used for medical purposes in the Holy Land, from archaeological records. As archaeologist Joel Zias and his colleagues explained of a find of medical cannabis with the mummified remains of a young woman who died in the pains of childbirth: "We assume that the ashes found in the tomb were cannabis, burned in a vessel and administered to the young girl as an inhalant to facilitate the birth process" (Zias, et al., 1993). This find of cannabis in a Judean cave in Bet Shemesh was further supported by the later analysis of glass vessels from the site which also contained evidence of cannabinoid residues (Zias, 1995).

However, in regards to this study, its is the references that have magical use of such substances, that are of more interest. Even prior to the final composition of the New Testament, claims were being made that Jesus was a "Magician." "In the 'Clementine Recognitions,' the charge is brought against Jesus that he did not perform his miracles as a Jewish prophet, but as a magician, an initiate of the heathen temples"(Doane 1882). "An 'early' (but nameless) tradition in the Babylonian Talmud reports that ...[Jesus] was 'to be stoned{!} because he practiced magic and incited {Jews to worship alien gods} and {as a false prophet} led Israel astray'"(Smith 1978). Likewise, Celsus explained that Jesus, born of illegitimate birth, after having "been brought up in obscurity ... went as a hired laborer to Egypt and there acquired experience of some [magical] powers. Thence he returned proclaiming himself a god on account of these powers." The "powers" referred to by Celsus, are the "miracles" attributed to Jesus, (in Greek the word means both the power itself and the miracles done by it). It was through performing such miracles that Jesus began to establish himself as the promised Messiah in the minds of the people.

> You (Jews) have sent chosen men into every part of the empire as official representatives (of the High Priest and the Sanhedrin), proclaiming, "A godless and libertine heresy has arisen from a certain Jesus, a Galilean magician. We had him crucified, (but) his disciples stole him by night from the tomb where he had been put (when taken down from the cross), and they deceive people, saying he has risen from the dead and ascended into heaven" (Justin Martyr [100-165 A.D.], Dialogue with Trypho).

In the first few centuries A.D., Christian Gnostic groups such as the Archontics, Valentians and Sethians rejected water baptism as superfluous, referring to it as an "incomplete baptism." In the Gnostic tractate, "Testimony of Truth, water Baptism is rejected with a reference to the fact that Jesus baptized none of his disciples" (Rudolph 1987). On the other hand, being "anointed with unutterable anointings" the so-called "sealings" recorded in Gnostic texts, can be seen as far more literal event, than the many metaphorical baptisms that are referred to. "There is water in water, there is fire in chrism." (Gospel of Philip). "The anointing with oil was the introduction of the candidate into unfading bliss, thus becoming a Christ"(Mead 1900). The surviving Gnostic descriptions of the effects of the anointing rite make it very clear that the holy oil had intense psycho-active properties that prepared the recipient for entrance into "unfading bliss."

Indeed in the Gnostic tractate the Gospel of Philip records that; "The anointing (chrisma) is superior to baptism. For from the anointing we were called 'anointed ones' (Christians), not because of the baptism. And Christ also was (so) named because of the anointing, for the Father anointed the son, and the son anointed the apostles, and the apostles anointed us. He (therefore) who has been anointed has the All. He has the resurrection, the light, the cross, the Holy Spirit..." The Gnostic texts further state that if "one receives this unction ... this person is no longer a Christian but a Christ" (Gospel of Philip). As the respected German expert on Gnosticism, Kurt Rudolph has noted:

> Anointing with oil has a greater representation than baptism in Gnosis and ... is even regarded as more significant.... Magical connotations also played an important role: anointing oil expelled demons and gave protection against them; correspondingly it cured and dispelled the "sickness" of the soul and

> body. Hence exorcism (driving out) was performed by means of anointing. The ancient magical texts provide abundant evidence for this application of oi. (Rudolph 1987).

The importance of the Holy ointment amongst the early Christians is also attested to in the apocryphal book, The Acts of Thomas, which has the rite of anointing clearly eclipse the significance and importance of the placebo water baptism. This, and the ointments entheogenic effects derived from a certain "plant," is aptly demonstrated in the prayers and invocations which the apocryphal book recorded as accompanying the rite. "Holy Oil, given us for sanctification, hidden mystery in which the cross was shown us, you are the unfolder of the hidden parts. You are the humiliator of stubborn deeds. You are the one who shows the hidden treasures. You are the plant of kindness. Let your power come ... by this [unction]."

Interestingly, Gnostic texts give indications that cannabis, or possibly some other psychoactive substance, may have also burned as incense, and used by Jesus, along with the cannabis-enriched anointing oil and other entheogens, in complicated shamanic ceremonies. Summarizing a German translation of the "Second Book of Ieou [aka Jeu]," which is believed to have been originally written down on papyrus sometime between the first and third century A.D., Professor G.R.S. Mead described this Gnostic tractate which recorded the story of Jesus bidding his twelve male disciples along with some women disciples, to join him so that he can reveal to them the great mystery of the Treasure of Light. This involved a complicated system of passwords and initiations, which promised the successful candidate attainment of the keys of Gnosis needed to pass through the planetary spheres with their corresponding zodiacal signs as well as past their various guardians, back to the kingdom of light. This tractate clearly depicts Christ in the role of the cosmic redeemer. In order to accomplish this the candidates have to be initiated by the three Baptisms; The Baptism of Water, the Baptism of Fire, and the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, "and thereafter the Mystery of the Spiritual Chrism [i.e.-anointing]" (Mead 1900).

In reference to the various seals and their symbols referred to in "The Books of Jeu," Erin Evans notes that although very rare for this era, "similar symbols with comparable usage abound in the Medieval and renaissance periods ... [although] it is impossible to determine whether a continuous tradition or mindset existed between these periods" (Evan, 2015). Evans points to grimoires such as *The Picatrix*, and *The Lesser Key of Solomon* in this regard, as well as the works of magicians like Dr. John Dee and Agrippa. As we shall see throughout this study, these Gnostic rituals and their ascensions through the planetary archons have very much in common with the astral magic of the medieval and Renaissance period, and this also includes the use of cannabis and other psychoactive substances.

Jesus tells his followers that the master-mysteries of the Treasure of Light, are the Seven Voices, (perhaps the correct passwords to make it through the planetary spheres), the Great Name of all names, (likely the secret name of the “hidden God”), and the mystery of the Five Trees, which in this case, may mean having knowledge of certain magical plants that were used as a shamanistic catalyst in the ceremony. These same five trees were referred to in what is possibly the oldest Christian text in existence, The Gospel of Thomas: “...there are five trees for you in Paradise.... Whoever becomes acquainted with them will not experience death.” In the Gnostic view, “not experiencing death” meant reaching a certain state of interior purification or enlightenment, at which point the initiate would “rise from the dead,” meaning ignorance and blindness, and “never grew old and became immortal,” that is to say, he gained possession of the unbroken consciousness of his spiritual core, and as such realized that he was a part of the larger Cosmic whole that continued on long after the disappearance of the material body. The “Second Book of Ieou, gives us a profound description of the shamanistic ceremony that led to this higher state, in part through the ingestion of the “five trees”:

> All of these mysteries Jesus promises to give to His disciples, that they may be called “Children of the Fullness (Pleroma) perfected in all mysteries.” The Master then gathers His disciples, men and women, round him with the words: “Come all of you and receive the three Baptisms ere I tell you the mystery of the Rulers!”
>
> ...They do so, and the Master sets forth a place of offering ... placing one wine-jar on the right and on the left, and strews certain berries and spices round the vessels; He then makes the disciples clothe themselves in white linen robes, puts a certain plant in their mouths, and the number of the Seven Voices and also another plant in their hands, and ranges them in order round the sacrifice (Mead 1900).

Continuing with the ritual, Jesus spreads a linen cloth, and gives the disciples cups, and other articles, and seals their foreheads with a magical diagram. Then, as in shamanistic and magical ceremonies throughout the world, he turns his disciples to the four corners of the world, with their feet together in an attitude of prayer. “He then offers a prayer which is prefixed with an invocation in the mystery-language, interspersed with triple Amens, and continues as follows”(Mead 1900):

> Hear Me, My Father, Father of all fatherhood, Boundless Light, who art in the Treasure of light! May the

> Supporters ... come, who serve the Seven Virgins of Light who preside over the baptism of Life. [The mystery-names of the Supporters are here given.] May they come and baptize my disciples with the Water of Life of the Seven Virgins of Light, and wash away their sins and purify their iniquities, and number them among the heirs of the Kingdom of Light, and if Thou hast forgiven their sins and blotted out their iniquities, then may a wonder be done, and Zorokothora come and bring the Water of the Baptism of Life into one of these wine-jars.
>
> The wonder takes place, and the wine in the right-hand jar becomes water; and Jesus baptizes them and gives them of the sacrifice, and seals them with the seal ... to their great joy. This is the Baptism of Water; we are next given a description of the Baptism of Fire. In this rite ... vine-branches are used; they are strewn with various materials of incense. The Eucharist is prepared, and ... the number of the Seven Voices is again used, but the seal is different.
>
> The prayer ... [this time, is to] the Virgin of Life, herself, the judge; she it is who gives the Water of the Baptism of Fire. A wonder is asked for in "the fire of this fragrant incense," and it is brought about by the agency of Zorokothora.... What the nature of the wonder was, is not stated. Jesus baptizes the disciples, gives them of the Eucharist sacrifice, and seals their foreheads with the seal of the Virgin of Light.
>
> Next follows the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. In this rite both the wine-jars and vine-branches are used.... A wonder again takes place, but is not further specified.... After this we have the Mystery of Withdrawing the Evil of the Rulers ... and consists of an elaborate incense-offering.... At the end of it the disciples ... have now become immortal and can follow Jesus into all spaces whither they would go (Mead, 1900).

The "wonder" contained in the incense used by Jesus in the ceremony, and which so perplexed Mead as to what this implied, was presumably a reference to its indescribable entheogenic effects; As likely did the other undefined "wonder," indicate the magical properties of the different plants used in the ceremony and which were identified to the participants as the Mystery of the Five Trees.

What the other plants that were used in the "Mystery of the five trees," we can only speculate. The accounts of mandrake in Genesis and in Solomon's Song of Songs clearly document the long-term interest the Hebrews had with these seemingly magical plant angels. That certain heretical branches of the faith, such as the Gnostics passed down the use and knowledge of such plants, is self-evident.

Mandrake had been used magically throughout the ancient world, and in "Roman times that magic began extensively to be associated with the psychoactive properties of the plant" (Schultes & Hofman 1979\1992).In the first century the Jewish historian Josephus wrote of a plant which grew in the Dead Sea area and was used for its magical properties, from the description and magical acts which had to be performed for its harvest, Professors Schultes and Hofman have speculated that it may have been mandrake. "Early Christians believed that the mandrake root [which like ginseng sometimes appears in a humanoid form] was originally created by God as an experiment before he created man in the Garden of Eden" (Schultes & Hofman 1979\1992). William Menzies Alexander, in his *Demonic Possession in the New Testament: Its Historical, Medical, and Theological Aspects*, also refers to the use of mandrake in the early Christian period, commenting that "The sole value of the plant depended on its anti-demonic properties"(Alexander 1902\1980). A statement that indicates mandrake use could be seen in line with the sacraments that helped to overcome the demonic-like planetary archons.

The addition of a powerful hallucinatory drug such as mandrake, (and or belladonna which was also popular in the Middle East at that time), would help to explain some of the more extreme experiences related to the holy anointings and different baptisms described above. Some of the descriptions of the effects of the ointments, which could be seen to parallel those later used by witches to travel to the Sabbath, do open up the possibility that by this time in history other potent psychoactives, like mandrake may have been added (the different visions attained being attributed to cultural set and setting of the ingestors).

The name Zorokothora, has strong indications of the name Zoroaster, the Persian sage who played psychopomp initiator to his disciples, in a similar way to that attributed to Jesus in the Second Book of Ieou. Another Gnostic tractate, The Apocryphon of John, has Jesus make mention of Zoroaster's teachings himself, declaring to John: "if you wish to know them, it is written in the book of Zoroaster." Jesus may have not been here referring directly to the Zoroastrian Holy Books, the *Gathas* or *Zend Avesta*, but instead to a tractate that was popular with early Gnostic groups entitled *Zostrianos*. This figure is said by some to represent a person in "the lineage of the famous Persian magus Zoroaster" (Sieber 1988), and by others the Persian shaman Zoroaster himself; "[I]n the Nag Hammadi document Zostrianos ... the ancient Iranian prophet is [Zoroaster] portrayed, in accordance with the ideas of late antiquity, as the proclaimer of secret doctrines. His wisdom he obtains in the course of a heavenly journey which he experiences in the desert" (Rudolph 1987) The narrator of the tractate travels through the seven spheres of the evil archons, in an attempt to reach the "place of repentance."... "But he can enter these only when he has subjected himself to various baptisms which ... admit him into the heavenly mysteries. The baptisms are thus in nature of an initiation (where progress from one stage to the next is also an advance in spiritual insight)" (Rudolph 1987).

As discussed in Chapter 1, ancient Zoroastrian traditions maintain that Zoroaster and other figures used a preparation of hemp-infused wine to achieve the type of shamanistic flight that is described in the Gnostic tractate *Zostrianos*, and that the ancient Persian sage initiated others into its use. Interestingly, and pointedly, the sadly fragmented Gnostic tractate *Zostrianos* has some obvious references to a drink which acted as a catalyst for the author's voyage: "After I parted from the Somatic darkness in me and the psychic chaos in mind and the feminine desire ... I did not use it again..." And again later, tying in the effects of the drink with references to "baptism"; "And I said, I have asked about the mixture [...] it is perfect and gives [...] there is power which [has ... those] in which we receive baptism..." The experiences of the ancient Gnostic psychonaut recorded in Zostrianos, with its Baptism to the different levels or realms of heaven, closely parallels the experiences had by the Zoroastrian hero Ardu Viraf, who was transported in soul to heaven after drinking a preparation of bangha (hemp, bhang). The similarities between Viraf's ascent and those attributed to the later Gnostic groups have been noted,(Hinnells 1973).

In relation to this it is important to note that in The Book of Ieou, a rite is described in which "wine-jars and vine-branches are used," considering what we have already seen in regards to both earlier Zoroastrian accounts and Ezra's "fiery cup," this does open up the speculation to cannabis, or possibly other substances being infused into wine. This brings us to Salverte's 19th-century example of the Gnostic Marcus as evidence for ancient use of drugs in rituals. "It is said that in their [Marcus and his followers] religious ceremonies aphrodisiac beverages were administered to women. Without judging in this particular case, we believe that powerful aphrodisiacs were occasionally used in the mysterious orgies of polytheism" (Salverte, 1829/1846). Salverte's English editor A.T. Thompson adds: "The Markesians were a sect named from their chief, the heresiarch Mark, who was guilty of so many superstitions and impostures. Among others, St. Irenaeus informs us, that in consecrating chalices filled with water and wine, according to the Christian rite, he filled the chalices with a certain red liquor which he called blood. He also permitted women to consecrate the holy mysteries." (Thompson, 1846).

Marcus' infused wine also caught the eye of Lynn Thorndike, in his *A History of Magic and Experimental Science*. Thorndike traced this sort of drug-infused magical practice by the Gnostics to Simon Magus, who he sees from references in Irenaenus, as having used "love-philtres" in magical sex rites, with "incantations ...

enchantments, familiar spirits and 'dream-senders'" (Thorndike, 1923). Or more simply put, "the proto-orthodox believed that Simon was drugging his converts in an effort to draw them to become his followers" (Hatsis, 2015). Love philtres also known as a "poculum amatory (literally 'love-cup') was both a stupefacient and an exciter that 'impair[ed] the senses and stirs within ... apparitions and frenzied loves'[3] ... Concocted of various plants, herbs, and roots ... [and] had been employed for centuries to 'lull all pain and anger, and bring forgetfulness to every sorrow,' as Helen of Troy famously lamented in Homer's Odyssey" (Hatsis, 2015).

> Next to Simon Magus, Marcus was the Gnostic and heretic most notorious as a practitioner of the magical arts.... In performing the Eucharist he would change white wine placed in three wine cups into three different colors ... an alteration Marcus himself regarded as a manifestation of divine grace. Epiphanius attributes the change to an incantation muttered by Marcus while pretending to perform the Eucharist. Hippolytus, who ascribes to Marcus's feats partly to sleight-of-hand and partly to demons, in this case charges that he furtively dropped some drug into the wine...
>
> Irenaeus ... states that Marcus had a familiar demon by whose aid he was able to prophesy, and that he pretended to confer this gift upon others. He also accuses Marcus of seducing women by means of philtres and love potions which he compounded...
>
> Other heretics with Gnostic views who were accused of magic ... were the followers of Carpicrates, who employed incantations and spells, philtres and potions, who attracted spirits to themselves and made light of the cosmic angels and who pretended to have great power over things ... by magic... (Thorndike, 1923).

These interpretations are particularly interesting to this author, as independently more than a decade-and-a-half before reading these comments from Salverte and Thompson, and more than 70 years after Thorndike, I had drawn similar conclusions about the Gnostics, and particularly about Marcus and his followers (Bennett & McQueen, 2001). More recently, Marcus' Gnostic sex rites have been explored by Tom Hatsis, who notes that "we can be assured that he ... knew about the properties of some powerful hallucinogens" and despite Irenaeus' condemnation of such practice as merely a means of drugging women for seduction, in relation to the Gnostic quest for "direct experience ... he might have interpreted the ingestion of his potions as providing visionary or otherwise psyche-magical experience" (Hatsis, 2015).

We may get some idea as to what took place in such initiatory rituals from the description in the second century church father Irenaeus' condemnations of the sex and drug antics of the Gnostic teacher Marcus. Even in its derogatory form, Irenaeus' account of the rite performed by Marcus "affords a remarkable and very singular insight into the Gnostic celebration of the Eucharist," which they believed "effects a realization of the original oneness of the Pleroma" (Rudolph 1987). Church father Irenaeus was incensed with Marcus the magicians praying over a cup of purple liquid mixed with wine, a concoction he claimed was the blood of Grace. As Irenaeus wrote of the Gnostic Marcus' use of this preparation:

> Pretending to consecrate cups mixed with wine, and protracting to great length the word of invocation, he contrives to give them a purple and reddish color, so that Charis who is one of those that are superior to all things, should be thought to drop her own blood into that cup through means of his invocation, and that thus those who are present should be led to rejoice to taste of that cup, in order that, by so doing, the Charis, who is set forth by this magician, may also flow into them... When this has been done, he ... pronounces these words: "May that Chaffs who is before all things, and who transcends all knowledge and speech, fill thine inner man, and multiply in thee her own knowledge, by sowing the grain of mustard seed in thee as in good soil..."
>
> It appears probable enough that this man possesses a demon as his familiar spirit, by means of whom he seems able to prophesy, and also enables as many as he counts worthy to be partakers of his Charis themselves to prophesy. He devotes himself especially to women, and those such as are well-bred, and elegantly attired, and of great wealth, whom he frequently seeks to draw after him, by addressing them in such seductive words as these: "I am eager to make thee a partaker of my Charis, since the Father of all doth continually behold thy angel before His face. Now the place of thy angel is among us: it behoves us to become one. Receive first from me and by me [the gift of] Chaffs. Adorn thyself as a bride who is expecting her bridegroom, that thou mayest be what I am, and I what thou art. Establish the germ of light in thy nuptial chamber. Receive from me a spouse, and become receptive of him, while thou art received by him. Behold Charis has descended upon thee; open thy mouth and prophesy." On the woman replying, "I have never at any time prophesied, nor do I know how to prophesy"; then engaging, for the second time, in certain invocations, so as to astound his deluded victim, he says to her, "Open thy mouth, speak whatsoever occurs to thee, and thou shalt prophesy." She then, vainly puffed up

> and elated by these words, and greatly excited in soul by the expectation that it is herself who is to prophesy, her heart beating violently [from emotion], reaches the requisite pitch of audacity, and idly as well as impudently utters some nonsense as it happens to occur to her, such as might be expected from one heated by an empty spirit.... Henceforth she reckons herself a prophetess, and expresses her thanks to Marcus for having imparted to her of his own Chaffs. She then makes the effort to reward him, not only by the gift of her possessions (in which way he has collected a very large fortune), but also by yielding up to him her person, desiring in every way to be united to him, that she may become altogether one with him...
>
> Some of his disciples, too, addicting themselves to the same practices, have deceived many silly women, and defiled them. They proclaim themselves as being "perfect," so that no one can be compared to them with respect to the immensity of their knowledge, nor even were you to mention Paul or Peter, or any other of the apostles. They assert that they themselves know more than all others, and that they alone have imbibed the greatness of the knowledge of that power which is unspeakable. They also maintain that they have attained to a height above all power, and that therefore they are free in every respect to act as they please, having no one to fear in anything. For they affirm, that because of the "Redemption" it has come to pass that they can neither be apprehended, nor even seen by the judge.

It is worth noting that Marcus' infused wine is referred to as the "blood" of Charis, in relation to the similar identification of wine as the "blood of Christ" in the Christian Eucharist. According to Irenaeus, the Bridal Chamber rite as performed by Marcus and his followers took place at a banquet, and the candidate was determined by lot. The rite is obviously reminiscent of the Sacred Wedding of the Song of Songs, and fertility rites of the Canaanites, where it was believed that the physical union of the participants acted as imitative magic for the union of God and Goddess (Pope 1977: Bennett& McQueen, 2001). As for the Gnostics, they apparently related their own sex rite in the Bridal Chamber ceremony, and its union of two souls, as representing the heavenly conjunction of the earth-bound spark of light's entrance back into the One, or Pleroma (Kingdom of Light). This Tantric-like gnostic ceremony is also referred to in the Gnostic tract "The Ode to Sophia," which describes how "immortal food (ambrosia) nourisheth them" as well as the ritual chamber where the rite was held. "Her chamber is bright with light and breatheth forth the odor of balsam and all spices, and giveth out a sweet smell of myrrh and Indian leaf, and within are myrtles strown on the floor, and of all manner of odorous flowers..."

Again, like Tantrism where wine, cannabis and a variety of other intoxicants are used, we can see from the references to wine, ambrosial food, and especially "Indian Leaf," (which seems a likely reference to cannabis), that similar if not identical substances were used. The reference to "Indian leaf" in a Gnostic text, opens up the possibility that the references to "charis" in the references to Marcus may have been in reference to an Indian name of cannabis resin "charas," given to who "he counts worthy to be partakers of his Charis." Likewise, with the interchangeable use of "Chaff," which brings to mind the psychoactive chaff around the seeds of cannabis, if we are to consider the possibility of cannabis in this reference, although, the more general view is that Charis indicates the Goddess of grace. As Tom Hatsis, who went back to the original Greek texts, has recently explained of this situation, Marcus was" knowledgeable in *ars magica pharmaka*, Marcus .... formed his own church, an institute equal parts Greek philosophy, pagan entheogenism, and sex magic" (Hatsis, 2018):

> Marcus' main mystery rite recalls something akin to the [Gnostic] Bridal Chamber if only in its sanctification of coitus and pharmaka. However, instead of paralleling the sexual union of Sophia and Christ (as in the Bridal Chamber mystery) Marcus entheogenically awakened "Charis" in both women and men with a special trimma – a "mixed" wine. And here I do mean "entheogenic" proper. This was no mystheogen. For Charis, the goddess of grace, would spill her blood – her essence – into the Eucharist, making it accessible to anyone who partook, a use of pharmaka every bit as entheogenic as oracles "inhaling" Apollo or Bacchants "drinking" Dionysus (Hatsis, 2018).

Through such use of ritual sex and drugs, in the Tantric view, the: "phenomenal world is transcended, dualities abolished, egoness lost, and the two polar opposites fuse into a state of intimate and blissful oneness. It is an experience of the soul's extinction in God, and a foretaste of the divine"(Walker 1982). Texts such as the "Kularnava Tantra," go as far as to state that sexual union is the only means by which the supreme union can be fully accomplished on the material plane. "The experience of absolute light ... when attained through ... sexual union ... is the Clear Light of Gnosis, and of Nirvanic consciousness"(Eliade 1962).

The early Gnostic Christians who performed this sexual ceremony, saw nothing at all heretical in their actions, but considered the rite a spiritually imbued religious act. Further, as indicated by surviving Gnostic documents, they believed that in this erotic rite they continued a tradition taught by the savior himself, and passed down to them through the apostles. Furthermore, it seems these Gnostic sex rites likely influenced later practices in the Alchemical tradition, and certainly played a influential role in the Sex Magick of later occultists, particularly Aleister Crowley and the Gnostic Mass, and the Eucharistic-like role placed on sexual fluids in sex magick, which was a common trait of ancient Gnostic sex rites, which I have explored in seamy detail, elsewhere, as well as the use of drugs in conjunction with such rites (Bennett & McQueen, 2001). Centuries later, accusations of Gnostic sex rites would be labeled against both the Templars and Witches.

"I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven..."

Gnostic scriptures indicate that it was not just powerful visionary hallucinations, and promises of an afterlife that were sought in the initiations performed by Jesus, (and other later Gnostics), but in fact, a profound psychological change in the participant that offered them a new perspective on the world and their role in it. This was accomplished through the secret teachings known as "the keys of the kingdom of heaven," which the New Testament Jesus secretly gave his disciples, and which are represented by the Gnostic initiations and tractates. One was not truly "saved" until they had attained to a heightened state of Gnosis that their practice and study offered the dedicated devotee. As Jesus explains in the Pistis Sophia: "I say unto you, even though a righteous man may have not committed any sin at all, it is impossible to take him into the Kingdom of Light, because the sign of the Kingdom of the Mysteries is not with him."

In the Gnostic view, both salvation, and the attainment of the "kingdom of heaven" on the material plane were accomplished by some Gnostic sects throughthrough self-analyzing reflection, and a series of entheogenic initiations. These rituals were believed by the Gnostics to restore the soul back to its original purity as it was before its entrapment in matter. In Gnostic belief, the sparks of light which descended from the Kingdom of Light were continually clothed in faults and passions acquired from each of the seven planetary spheres as they descended to earth and it was these attributes which prevented the initiate from achieving enlightenment. It is from this model that we find the origins of the Christian "Seven Deadly Sins." "As the souls descend, they draw with them the torpor of Saturn, the wrathfulness of Mars, the concupiscence of Venus, the greed of gain for Mercury, the lust for power of Jupiter; which things effect a confusion in the souls, so that they can no longer make use of their own power and proper faculties" (Jonas 1958). This cosmological view would later become a key part of Western Hermetic Magic.

Like the seven layers of clothing and jewelry that Ishtar removed in her ancient descent mythology and on which the ascension of the planetary spheres likely originated from, the Gnostic initiations provided the means to strip away these burdensome seven layers of mental faculties, and emotional attributes. Poimandres, writing around 150 A.D., gives us some idea of what this seven-stage initiation hoped to accomplish, as well as a further explanation of Gnostic cosmology which exemplifies its relation to both Jewish Kabalism with its sephiroth, and Indian yoga with its chakras, as well as other similar ancient systems.

> To the first zone he gives the capacity to grow or to diminish, to the second (zone) his evil machinations,

> an (henceforth) ineffectual cunning, to the third (zone) the deceit of (henceforth) ineffectual lust, to the fourth (zone) ineffectual greedy love of power, to the fifth (zone) unholy boldness and rash audacity, to the sixth (zone) ineffectual evil strivings after riches, and to the seventh (zone) the lurking lie ... [T]hen stripped of all the activities of the harmony (of the spheres), he reaches the nature of the Ogdoad ... (now) with his own power, and with those who are there he praises the Father.... Then in order they go up to the Father, change themselves into powers, and having become powers they (themselves) come to be in God (Poimandres, 2nd century).

An almost identical system can be found in the Mithraic rites that originated from Zoroastrian influences (and by which the Gnostics were obviously so strongly influenced), as the soul ascended through these "different zones, it rid itself, as one would of garments, of the passions and faculties that it had received in its descent to the earth, it abandoned to the Moon its vital and nutritive energy, to Mercury its desires, to Venus its wicked appetites, to the Sun its intellectual capacities, to Mars its love of war, to Jupiter its ambitious dreams, to Saturn its inclinations. It was naked, stripped of every vice and every sensibility, when it penetrated the eighth heaven... "(Cumont 1956).

Joseph Campbell compared the seven stage Mithraic ascension to the Indian technique of Kundalini Yoga, where the "aim was to bring the ... spiritual force of the yogi, from its lowest seat at the base of the spine, up an interior path to the crown of the head, completing seven stages, at each of which the psychological limitations of the lower planes of commitment are surpassed," (Campbell 1964).

By providing a formalized program for this spiritual ascension, the Mithraic cult aimed "to bring about ... a psychological transformation in the candidate for knowledge, as a result of which his mind should come to rest in the realization that duality is secondary" (Campbell 1964). Alain Danielou felt that the descriptions found in Indian texts, "may be useful interpreting the various references made to ... Mithraic initiation rites, as well as those of ... later traditions, such as the Gnostics..."(Danielou 1992).

Interestingly, a number of modern scholars have suggested that cannabis and other plants were used in Mithraic initiations. As noted, Dr. David Hillman, who holds the combined degrees of a Ph.D. in Classics and a M.S. in Bacteriology, has written extensively about the role of drugs in Ancient Greece and Rome. "I would have to say that yes, cannabis was very widespread in the cult of Mithras" (Hillman, 2014). Professor of Classics, Carl Ruck explains "Mithraism was the form of the Haoma cult ... [from] the Zoroastrian religion, as it passed into Europe ...

it was one of the three great religions of the Roman Empire, finally supplanted by Christianity. They had a sevenfold sequence of initiations, in which a variety of different sacred drugs would have been employed ... they gathered in a small, confined underground space, and the space was always fumigated. So entering the sacred space, would have given a sense of holiness, and no doubt cannabis was one of the ingredients in the incense" (Ruck, 2014). Writing at the end of the 19th-century George W. Brown, felt that the Mithraic cult continued on with the age-old practice of drinking a cannabis-infused form of Haoma:

> Mithra is presented in the Zoroastrian system as an intermediate between Ormazd and Ahriman, and was known as a mediator. He taught mankind to make vows and offerings, and introduced animal sacrifices. It was he who introduced the Haoma worship. This was an intoxicating beverage, prepared from the green stalks of the moon-plant, otherwise Cannabis Indica, or Indian hemp.... It was tasted by the priests on sacrificial occasions, whilst hymns were sung in its praise. Its action was that of hashish. It produced intoxication and stimulation of the senses, which were taken for inspiration (Brown, 1890).

Like their Mithraic counterparts, the Gnostic baptisms, or initiations were intended to distinguish and separate the different components of intellect and emotion that make up the personal "ego," and through this unveiling, come into contact with the very core of consciousness itself. In this context the planetary spheres became associated with these mental and emotional faculties and were seen as subtle centers within the body of the individual, which at the same time, on a larger and collective level, was the body of the Heavenly Man (Anthropos), just as the Indian yogi's body represented the body of Shiva. The enlightened Gnostic initiate knew how to distinguish these aspects of consciousness, and thereby unveil them individually, thus making a further ascension through the planetary spheres of the androgynous Heavenly Man with the aid of the serpent energy. A cosmology that is clearly analogous to that of the Indian system's ascension of the kundalini energy up through the different chakras, to the top of the head where it causes a radical switch in consciousness obliterating the sense of individuation, thus awakening the Shiva aspect of the individual. In Gnostic scriptures, the initiates who had attained to this undivided state of consciousness, were seen as those who had entered "the kingdom of heaven," a frame of mind identical to that of the Yogic "Samadhi." As with the similar goal of yoga, the "kingdom of heaven" state, although attained instantaneously, required years of vigorous training in preparation.

In relation to our hypothesis that the earlier Christians, like certain yogis in the East, used cannabis to attain this enlightened state, it is interesting to note a reference that appears in Judith Hooper and Dick Teresi's stellar book on the human brain, *The Three Pound Universe*:

> One can look at some religious aphorisms as a form of psychological noise reduction," says Charles ("Chuck") Honorton who directs the Princeton Psychophysical Research Laboratories in New Jersey. Purity, poverty, contemplation, and so on aren't just for the sake of piety. These are methods of removing sensory distraction and increasing mental concentration. A good example is Patanjalis Yogasutras, composed in the second century B.C. in India. All the practices can be seen as systematic noise reduction, which eventually culminates in samahdi, a transcendental state in which normal boundaries between the self and others disappears. It may not be dissimilar to what people experience on marijuana when they find themselves staring at the wallpaper for twenty minutes (Hooper & Teresi 1986).

Again, like older branches of Yoga, where a variety of drug plants are used to attain this goal, the different sacraments described in the Gnostic texts, such as the "five trees," may well have been different entheogens that enhanced certain areas of consciousness, and suppressed others, making the distinction between these mental coverings, related to the seals of the seven archons, more obvious and therefore easier to bypass. Likewise in Indian Tantrism the chakras can be awakened through "rituals [and] ... plant extracts.... The flow of energy that they produce can help a person attain enlightenment. In Tantrism, many aphrodisiacs [cannabis, mandrake, etc.] are viewed as foods for the kundalini serpent and are thought to affect both the serpent, which reposes in the body, and the chakras"(Rätsch 1997).

These elements are very important in understanding the role of cannabis and other substances in later medieval magic, where the relationships of certain plants, colors, and other elements, were all chosen for their relationship with the celestial bodies, for magical rites, and can be seen in grimoires like the 13th century *The Picatrix*, and 16th century *Sepher Raziel: Liber Salomonis*, where we find the use of cannabis and other substances, in this sort of context, as well as the later Kabbalistic rituals of the19th- and early 20th-century practitioners of Magick.

Christianity and the Occult

As I have explored in more detail elsewhere (Bennett & McQueen, 2001) the Catholic Church suppression of the Gnostics and Pagan sects, included the use of psychoactive substances. This can be most pointedly seen in New Testament references to "sorcery" which is translated from the Greek term "pharmakeia," a word where we get the modern term pharmacy, and which relates directly to the use of herbs in magical rites. Thus not surprising, the use of these substances often in combination with the beliefs they traveled with, was forced underground, becoming "occult," meaning "hidden."

Gnostic reversals, such as the turning of Yahweh into a demonic force, and the deification of the Serpent, which was at times equated with Jesus, also brings to mind the secret rites the later witches were accused of, such as the Black Sabbath, and the use of ointments. And if not in the origins of these rites, then at least in the origins of the accusations from the Church in regards to them. Accusations of Gnostic heresy were also directed at the Cathars of Southern France (1200-1400 A.D.), a heresy said to have been spread by hemp weavers, and this resulted in one of the greatest mass executions of Church history.

Edith Starr Miller, aka Lady Queenborough, a early 20th-century New York socialite and wife of the 1st Baron of Queenborough, treasurer of the League of Nations, condemned Gnostic magical practices, which she linked with the sometimes drug-fueled séances of her own day, in *The Occult Theocracy*:

> When the Gnostics practiced magic, they evoked the spirits of the dead exactly as do the occultists of today. Dawning Christianity was prolific in miracles so, in order to fight it, the disciples of Gnosticism had recourse to diabolical marvels. In this respect, are not contemporaneous spiritists, with their rapping tables and apparitions, Gnostics under another name?
>
> Secret Gnostic meetings lead to depravity, as the adepts indulge in every kind of turpitude and obscenity, often under the influence of drugs such as Indian Hemp (Cannabis Indica) or Opium, the medicinal properties of which, when administered under certain conditions, are provocative of mediumistic phenomena (Miller, 1933).

However, most important for this study, are the Holy Oils, incenses and elixirs of Judaism, Christianity and Gnosticism, "once we admit the use of holy oils, holy incense, and holy food and drink in ancient religion, we have to admit it for magic as well.... The magus adapted for his own purposes techniques that had worked for the priests for a very long time" (Luck, 1985/2006). As we shall see in this book, with references to hashish incense in the early medieval Picatrix, and cannabis ointments in *Sepher Raziel: Liber Salomonis*, along with other references in drug filled grimoires, this is clearly the case...

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[1] As cited in (James Geiwitz, Ph.D, 2001)

[2] As quoted in (Jonas, 1958)

[3] Hatsis cites Johann Weyer (1515-1581) (Weyer, 1991)

CHAPTER 3

The Hashishin

> *...among the Dervishes, the mental excitement and enthusiastic germ is ascribed by them entirely to divine inspiration, growing out of the Zikr, or invocation of the Deity. Among some of them, however, material means are also resorted to for the purpose of exciting, if not the mental faculties, at least the brain, so as to produce visionary glimpses of what is considered by them at least a foretaste of future happiness and enjoyment, in that existence which, the more sensible, hold to be entirely of a "spiritual" character.... The first intention of Hasheesh was evidently not as a stimulant. It was intended as a "spiritual" soporific, producing that quiescence of soul so dear to Orientals, and known throughout all the regions under Arabian influence by the name of "Kaif"... At Constantinople it is known by the name of "esrar," which word means a secret product or preparation...*
>
> – John Porter Brown, *The Dervishes, or Oriental Spiritualism*, (1868)

The meeting of medieval Europe with the Islamic world was pivotal in the introduction/re-introduction of things like Alchemy, Magic, Science, and Medicine into the Western World, which prior to the medieval crusades, had been suffering under a period aptly referred to as the Dark Ages, between the 4th to 12th centuries. In Europe, under Catholic domination, so much knowledge was lost and repressed. Moreover, the Islamic world was the axis point for the return of the ancient knowledge about cannabis to the West as well.

Some have suggested that hashish and cannabis were virtually unknown for the first few centuries of the Muslim history, and did not become popular till the 12th century. However, though not known to the masses, there are clear indications that some mystic use of cannabis continued on in Persia through the late Zoroastrian period and into the early Islamic times, though cloaked in secrecy. As others have noted, "the use of the intoxicating drugs was already known in pre-Muhammadan times under Khusraw Parwez, [ruled 590-623 A.D.]" (Houtsma, et al., 1936/1993). Khusraw Parwez was a Sasanian King who ruled from 590-628 A.D. "Mazdean tradition ... condemns him as an unjust tyrant, responsible for the decline of the religion and the empire" (Yar-Shater, 1983). The 19th-century botanist William Dymock also referred to the Persian tradition regarding the introduction of cannabis during the reign of Sasanian King Khusraw, but held the view that the use of cannabis in the area was much more ancient: "According to tradition, the use of hemp as an intoxicant was first made known in Persia by Birarslan, an Indian pilgrim, in the reign of Khusru [*sic*] the First ... but ... its injurious properties appear to have been known long before that date" (Dymock, 1893). Thus, even in the end period of the

Zoroastrian empire, it seems likely that the ancient use of cannabis had continued, and that this was recognized by certain Islamic sources. "Hemp ... as an intoxicant ... was passed on via Persians, to the Arabs" (Sherratt, 1997). In fact, some of the Zoroastrian texts we have discussed for their references to cannabis under the names *bhanga* and *mang*, survive in copies that were transcribed as late as the 5th century AD, which brings us close to the early Islamic period. Indeed, as we explore the references to the use of hashish among the Persian Ismailis we get a clear sense that Zoroastrian traditions and beliefs about cannabis traveled with it.

Regardless of how it reached Islam, once there, some members of the society embraced it while others held it with disdain. Cannabis is not explicitly prohibited like alcohol in the Koran, so the Islamic relationship with cannabis has fluctuated somewhat over the centuries, and through different regions, sometimes accepted and celebrated, at other times prohibited and punished. Early Islamic commentators "never failed to remark on the fact that hashish is not mentioned in the Qur'an or the old Prophetic traditions, nor were they able to find any express reference to it in the name of the four legal schools" (Rosenthal, 1971). As a result of this lack of clarity about the morality of its use, cannabis has been surrounded in controversy and thus a matter of debate in Islamic society since very early times.

Despite harsh attempts at prohibition, by later medieval times hashish use was surprisingly widespread. In *The Herb: Hashish versus Medieval Muslim Society*, Franz Rosenthal cites the medieval Sufi poet Fuzuli (1483-1556) who noted that "Hashish can claim to be the friend of dervishes and to be available in the corner of every mosque and among all kinds of scholars" (Rosenthal, 1971). In regard to the medieval Islamic attitude to cannabis, it is important to note, in relation to this study, that numerous scholars have suggested a Zoroastrian influence on the development of Islam, and conceivably such a Persian influence created a predisposed cultural acceptance of hemp use in Islamic esoteric circles. As Joseph Campbell explained: "It is obvious that in every syllable Islam is a continuation of the Zoroastrian-Jewish-Christian heritage..." (Campbell, 1964). This influence is particularly apparent in Persian Islamic groups such as the Sufis, Ismailis and Assassins, who were all largely influenced by the Zoroastrian tradition, and their use of hashish, is clearly a carry-over of the Persian mang/ Haoma tradition.

The Assassins, or Hashishins (Hashish eaters) as they are also known, as well as Sufis, dervishes and Islamic magicians all have a fascinating relationship with hashish, and even the religion's beloved founder and prophet has become a part of this lore. Muhammad was a merchant from an early age and worked the ancient trade routes between the Mediterranean Sea and Indian Ocean. Undoubtedly as a result of this he would have come under much foreign influence and into contact with the rare commodities traded by other travelers, which we can be sure included cannabis products, as well as the myths of magic which surrounded its consumption. Most of the cannabis influence seems to have originated in the Persian region, and interestingly a Zoroastrian influence has been suggested in the account of Mohamed's ascent to the heavens as described in the Koran and discussed in detail in the Hadith literature. A number of researchers have suggested that this event, as well as the details in it, were borrowed from the Persian story of "Arda Wiraz Namag," and his cannabis-induced journey into the after-world (Gray, 1902; Jackson, 1928). This astral voyage to the Cinvat Bridge mentioned in the *Arda Wiraz Namag* was particularly compared with the bridge over Hell as mentioned in the Hadith literature.

In 1905, thinking that in some way it discredited Islam, the Rev. W. St. Clair Tisdall gleefully claimed that the *Arda Wiraz Namag* was the source of the Prophet's ascent to the heavens and his witnessing of the denizens of Heaven and Hell. And this view has been echoed by other researchers: "This ascent to heaven (or *Miraj* in Arabic) can be compared to the account in the Pahlavi text called *Arta* (or Arda) *Viraf* written several hundred years before the Muslim era" (Warraq, 1995). "[T]he ascent of Muhammad to heaven and the passing visit to hell and paradise may be found in Zoroastrian tales dating some four hundred years before the time of Muhammad" (Masood, 2001).

An intoxicated and unconscious Arda Viraf witnessing scenes of Heaven and Hell in an 1871 Gujarati manuscript of the Zoroastrian Arda Viraf Nameh (Book of Arda Viraf), that copied illustration from a much older, but, unnamed Persian manuscript. Arda Viraf drinks "three gold cups with wine and 'Vistaspic' hemp (in other words hemp extract) ... and then falls asleep ... and during this time his soul visits heaven and hell" (Nyberg, 1938).

In the essay, "Celestial Botany Entheogenic Traces in

Islamic Mysticism," Frederick Dannaway also suggested that Muhammad's shamanic flight was "reminiscent of the ascent of Arda Viraf who takes a narcotic and takes a visionary flight through heaven and hell.... This ... may indicate that regional cults viewed the Islamic revelation through their own shamanic traditions or that Islam retained the ritual heritages of the ancient world. These traditions would be enshrouded in the mysteries of Shia Gnosis, alchemy and Sufism which spread into Europe" (Danaway, 2006).

Clearly Islamic groups carried on this tradition, as the poet Al-Is'irdi (1222-1258) noted of hashish: "It is the secret. In it the spirit ascends to the highest spots on a heavenly ascent of disembodied understanding." More pointedly, hashish was reputedly used for an almost identical purpose as that attributed to Zoroastrian psychonauts amongst the Persian Islamic heretics known as the Assassins, a branch of the still existing Isma'ilis.

Among the various bits of evidence that has been suggested for Mohamed's own use of cannabis, probably the most interesting comes from the *The Dabestān-e Mazāheb* (School of Religions), which was an examination and comparison of South Asian religions and sects of the mid-17th-cen-tury. The work is written in Persian, and is thought to have been written around 1655 B.C.E. It has been suggested that the author was an Islamic Sufi, and alternatively a practicing Zoroastrian. Thus, although written in the 17th century, some of the oral traditions recorded can conceivably be from a much earlier date.

The *Dabestān* records the following fascinating account of Muhammad's alleged introduction to cannabis, and the association of its use with his hereditary clan, the Hashim:

> There is a class among the Hindus who give themselves the term of Musslman-Sofis [Muslim-Sufis] and really agree in several tenets and opinions with the Sufis ... they relate that one day the Prophet was taking a pleasure-walk under the guidance of Jabril [The Muslim angel Gabriel] and came to a place where a great tumult was heard. Jabril said "This is the threshold of pleasure; enter into the house." The Prophet consented to go in and there he saw sitting forty persons naked as they came from their mother and a band busy serving; but whatever service the Prophet requested them ... to do, they did not comply, until the moment to grind bhang arrived. When they had ground it, they had no cloth through which they could strain and purify it; then the Prophet, having taken his turban from his hand, purified through it the juice of bhang, the color [green] of which [the bhang] remained on the turban; whence the garment [heraldry] of the Bini Hashem [Muhammad's subtribe] is green. When the Prophet rendered them this service, they were glad and said among themselves,

> "Let us give to this messenger of God, who is always running to the door of the ignorant, a little of the bhang, that he may obtain the secrets of the Almighty power." So they gave the remains of the juice to the Prophet. When he had drunk it he became possessed of the secrets of the Angel of Destiny, and whatever men heard from him came through the means of this bounty (Dabestan, 1655 A.D.).

Edward G. Browne, writing in the 19th century, noted that in his time one of the secret names of cannabis was "'Master Seyyid' ... from a fancied resemblance between its green color and the green turbans worn by reputed descendants of the Prophet" (Browne, 1897); so this was clearly a lasting tradition. Although the *Dabestān* is obviously a late addition to the Muslim tradition, earlier accounts of cannabis use, such as that of the Assassins, Isma'ilis and Sufi groups, gives clear indications that such practices were known very early in the Islamic world and, as the research in this volume has clearly shown, predated Islam by millennia. Moreover, these "heretical" Islamic sects considered themselves part of an authentic tradition, passed down by the Prophet through his descendants and their closest devotees, in much the same way as heretical Gnostic sects thought of themselves as the authentic "Christians" through association with Mary and other apostolic figures.

Considering the story of the *Dabestān* and the association of bhang with the green color of Muhammad's subtribe the Bini Hashem, it is interesting to note that the hashish ingesting Isma'ili believed their own esoteric wisdom and some of their leaders came from the hereditary lineage of Muhammad. The Isma'ili are an offshoot of one of the two main factions of Islam, the Shi'a, and the importance of hereditary descent from Muhammad is pivotal in the schism between this group and the other main faction, the Sunnis. It is among the offshoots of the Shia group that formed around this "heretic" Imam Isma'il, the founder of the Isma'ili, that we find the mystical use of hashish.

> There can be no doubt that the use of hemp as an intoxicant was encouraged by the Ismailians in the 8th century, as its effects tended to assist their followers in realizing the tenets of the sect:
>
> We've quaffed the emerald cup, the mystery we know,
>
> Who'd dream so weak a plant such mighty power could show![1]

As the Isma'ili and related sects were accused of drinking wine and consuming hashish, and the Isma'ili initially arose in Persia – the home of Zoroastrianism, alongside Muhammad's own Zoroastrian like shamanic flight, one is left with the reasonable speculation that perhaps the hidden seventh Imam, Isma'il, had taken it upon himself to sample of the mang- (cannabis) laced wine that had been the prize of the Zoroastrian priesthood and royalty in that area for more than a millennia. Such a situation would account for the use of hashish in initiation ceremonies by the branch of the Isma'ili that came to be known as the Assassins, and also certain Sufi sects that were known to have been influenced by them. An "out of turn" sampling of such a holy sacrament, could also be a reason for the controversy surrounding the persona of Isma'il, for as we have seen from the Zoroastrian period, the use of cannabis was restricted to a select elite and the king.

Although seen as particularly heretical, in the medieval Islamic world, the "combination of wine and hashish was quite often attempted...":

> A respectable scholar found nothing wrong in using both wine and hashish on the same occasion. The combination was praised as engendering at the same time "the laziness of hashish and energy of wine." Similarly, Ibrahim al-Mi'mar (d. 749/1348), called in this connection "master of the craft"... might wonder about the extraordinary effects of wine plus hashish:
>
> He mixed hashish with wine
> And died of intoxication and became confused on the spot,
> And I asked: what is this unexpected occurrence?
> When he was sober (again), he answered me saying;
> Be kind to your brother when he mixes.
>
> However, the combination was considered as particularly sinful... (Rosenthal, 1971).

The "death" referred to here was the temporary death of the self, or ego, a state of realization sought out by Mystics. As noted in Chapter 1, the pre-Islamic use of cannabis laced wines in Persia is well established. The 19th-century work, The *History of Ancient and Modern Wines* by Dr. Alexander Henderson, indicates that such combinations continued in the Islamic world for some centuries. The 11th-century Byzantine Jewish Doctor, Simeon Sethus wrote "the dried leaf, when drunk, as meal, or rather [as dried meal for a drink] produces a hospitable drunkenness and lack of sensation by the eater. For it is crushed or kneaded among the Arabs for wine, and it inebriates." Centuries later, both Islamic and European authors recorded this combination still in use: "The Jews and Armenians prepare wine on purpose for the Mahomedans, by adding lime, hemp, and other ingredients, to increase its pungency and strength; for the wine that soonest intoxicates is accounted best, and the lighter and delicate kinds are held in no estimation among the adherents of the Prophet" (Henderson, 1824). As Charles Dickens' journal *All the Year Round*, also noted:

> The best vineyards of Persia are situated in the mountainous districts that stretch from the Persian Gulf to the Caspian Sea. Sixty-five kinds of grape are grown there, its cultivation being abandoned to the Ghebers, the Armenians, and the Jews; for, though the Mohammedan part of the population drink wine without scruple, they assert that the infringement of the law of Islam consists in making the wine, not in drinking it – a convenient conclusion, which satisfies their consciences, and enables them to gratify their inclinations. Pure wine, however, is not for the topers of Ispahan and Teheran, the Jewish and Armenian dealers ministering to that fondness for narcotics which tend so greatly to enervate the East, by mixing myrrh, incense, and the juice of the Indian hemp with the finest growths (Dickens, 1862).

Most interestingly, in regard to this study, are the little known references to hashish infused wine, in the *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*.

> …I will therefore place this hashish in my cup of wine and thus I will strangle the serpent of my grief.
>
> The drinker alone can understand the language of the rose and of the vine, and not the faint-hearted, and the cheap of wit. To those who have no knowledge of hidden things, ignorance is to be pardoned, for the drunkard only is capable of tasting the delights which are an accompaniment thereof.[2]

These verses appear in Justin Huntly McCarthy's 1889 translation of the Khayyam's works, and not in the more well-known interpretations of J.F. Scott Fitzgerald (1859\1889). Khayyam is estimated to have written about 1,200 to 2,000 quatrains, and neither McCarthy or Fitzgerald attempted to cover all of them. Most admirers of the work are familiar with Fitzgerald's version, which did not include the hashish verses referred to by McCarthy. When one reads McCarthy's translation, the idea that Khayyam's "love of wine is but a cheating cant," i.e., as is now popularly suggested, Khayyam's wine is simply used to symbolize spiritual devotion, seems to fall by the wayside, and an actual intoxication of the spirit is what is referred to, as can be seen by other verses that refer to hashish.

> Art thou full of heaviness? Take thou a morsel of hashish, as large as a grain of barley, or drink but a small measure of rose-colored wine. Thou art become a sage, truly! Thou mayst not drink this, thou takest not that! Nothing is left to thee but to eat pebbles – go, and eat them then.

And again….

> Whenever on this green earth we are affected by joy, like unto the green steed of the sky, then with green youth I eat green hashish on the green sward until I

> lie below the green of the earth.

In this regard it is important to note, that Omar Khayyam, (1048-1131), the Persian poet, mathematician and astronomer, was a favored school chum of the notorious mystic, Hasan I. Sabbah, (1050?-1124), the original "Old Man of the Mountain," and founder of the Hashishins, or Assassins as they are better known. Khayyam's reference to placing hashish in wine is particularly interesting, considering what was discussed in Chapter 1 concerning the Zoroastrian use of this combination. Regarding this connection, John Bramhall, in his century-old essay on Omar Khayyam, offered some interesting speculation, in regard to how Khayyam may have come about his knowledge of hashish.

> [C]onsider that Khayyam was no Arabian, and much less a Turk, but a Persian whose not very remote ancestors were followers of Zoroaster.... And while there is little reason to believe that Khayyam, scholar though he was, had a knowledge of the Sanskrit [? actually, Avestan] of ancient Persia, he had, no doubt, read the History of Tabari, which had been translated into Arabic and was a standard work in all libraries and gave some account of the Avesta. If he had not listened to the recitations of the Parsees, whose bloody persecution at the hands of the Seljuq conquerors he may have witnessed, he must have had some knowledge of their meaning and of the sentiment of the ancient faith of his people. The Gathas, or hymns of Zoroaster, may have arrested his attention, particularly the Haoma Yasht, which might supply a source of the "spiritual wine" of the Sufis, and of the hasheesh of his alleged friend, Hassan ben Sabbah, the chief of the Assassins, as well as offer an excuse, perhaps, for Omar's devotion to "the cup" ... [I]t may be assumed that such an inquiring mind as that of al-Khayyami would have studied every line he could obtain (Bramhall, 1918).

Dādhi, the "Mystery Plant"

There is an interesting discussion about the identity of the plant indicated by the Arabic word Dādhi, that leads into a discussion about cannabis-infused wines, in Nawal Nasrallah's *Annals of the Caliphs' Kitchens: Ibn Sayyār al-Warrāq's Tenth-Century Baghdadi Cookbook* (2007). Dādhi, when referred to as a beverage, was a "strong date wine made potent and aromatic by adding dādhi." The identity of this dādhi however, is a matter of debate. "A frequent quoted verse reveals its effects upon drinkers, 'We drank dādhi until we felt/like we are kings of land and sea'" (Nasrallah, 2007). Physicians warned the elderly may experience headaches from its, use and users might feel slightly stupefied the next day, all potential effects of cannabis, as are some of the medical effects of ingested cannabis, such as aiding in the treatment of intestinal parasites, and hemorrhoids.

> Due to its potency, its use was curbed by authorities. In an anecdote, we learn that a governor felt it was his duty to tour around the herbalists' shops in town and caution them against selling dādhi, the date wine additive.... In lexicons such as Taj al-Arus and Al Muhit, it was defined as "the licentious drink of scoundrels" ... Al-Rahidi Caliph, "Umar bin Khattab (d. 644) called it khamr al-Sind ... intoxicating wine that only infidels would drink. Tradition has it that the Prophet Muhammad said al-dādhi are seeds brought from India. As for those who imbibed it, he said God would not accept their prayers for full forty years. Evidently, the region knew the drink long before the advent of Islam"(Nasrallah, 2007).

This is all very reminiscent of the various pogroms against cannabis that took place in this period.

Nasrallah cites ancient sources that refer to Dādhi, as a "mystery plant" that was "described as having astringent, tannic, bitter and aromatic qualities, used to enhance date wine ... and prevent it from getting sour. This additive is sometimes described as having narcotic properties that intensify the intoxicating effect of the wine upon its drinkers..." (Nasrallah, 2007). It is described as "aromatic as musk" with a "pleasant aroma," and can "induce sleep.... The word was also used as an epithet for a playful person, which is a perfect match for the Dionysan nature of the drink" (Nasrallah, 2007). Physical descriptions do bring cannabis flower clusters to mind.

> It is referred to as shay "something," a seed, a leaf, a cluster like a bunch of grapes, and a cone. Medieval sources tell us that the best dādhi plants grow in ... [the] southern coasts of the Arabian Peninsula ... Ibn Jazla specifies the mountain variety, especially the reddish brown ... ones that have been recently dried ... as being the best... (Nasrallah, 2007).

These are all descriptions that could well fit in with sun-dried seeded cannabis buds.

However, the references to dādhi, in medieval sources are somewhat contradictory. The term dādhi may have come to, or was originally used, to identify "a name for a number of wine additives, some of which are preservatives and enhancers with little narcotic substance that help make the wine less bloating. Others are strongly addictive narcotic substances that help preserve the wine" (Nasrallah, 2007). The term came also to have an association with pinecones, their seeds and pine resin, which was also used to preserve wine, since ancient times. The term goes back to Mesopotamian times and, where al-dādhi, was burnt as an offering to the moon god.

> [A]ssociating pine resin with the moon god of immortality in acknowledgment of its power to preserve dead bodies and prevent them from decaying can be traced further back to the ancient Soma drink in Indian mythology. It was the drink of the gods, first made when the ocean of milk was churned to obtain this divine intoxicating milky liquor. In Sanskrit dādhi may mean any thick viscous substance such as honey, resin, and smooth sour milk.[3] This sacred drink was then personified as the god Soma, a warrior, who later acquired a high rank among the gods – he became the god of water and fertility. Hence, Soma was a form of life sap of the earth or elixir of life. The god Soma became associated with the moon, since after he dropped this elixir of life down to earth (i.e. rain), it mounted to the moon and was drunk out of the moon by the gods who see it as a cup, which waned an waxed as it was emptied and refilled.
>
> Al-Birini says, in Hindi dādhi is tātkan ... which can easily read as dād-kan ... "tree of life," if we may break it into dād "life" and kan "tree," which confirms the rational behind the origins of the word (Nasrallah, 2007).

These comments are very interesting in relation to cannabis' identification with Soma. In earlier works I have connected Soma with the Middle Eastern myths of the Tree of Life, and even indicated that the pinecone-like objects depicted with the tree of life in various Mesopotamian reliefs, may indicate the pinecone-like buds of the same cannabis we know from textual references to qunubu (cannabis) which was used in rituals at that time (Bennett &McQueen, 2001; Bennett, 2010). Importantly, of the various candidates for the term she puts forth for dāhdi, Nawal Nasrallah seemed to favor cannabis:

> Dādhi is a plant with intoxicating leaves ... al Biruni ... says, during the early times of the Abbasids, a caravan of travelers happened to rest for a while at a

pond in the Sind region (western India) over which a dādhi plant cast its shadow, and shed its leaves into the pond. They drank from the water of the pond and got intoxicated.[4] When the went back to Baghdad they started the trend of using dādhi in making wine.

The intoxicating plant with its leaves is undoubtedly qinnab Hindi ... marijuana, a variety of hemp (cannabis sativa) also called hashisha.... The female plant looks like hops, it grows similar cones, but its upper leaves and cones contain the gland that produce the potent stuff THC in addition to the preserving and buttering agents. It was this substance that gave it the name sharab al-fusaq ... drink of scoundrels, and which ... "Umar bin al-Khattab called khamr al-Sind ... intoxicating wine of India that only infidels drink. Al-Maqrizi says that hashisha was first known in India, but then spread to Bilad al-Shahr in Yemen where it was widely grown. From there it spread to Iraq and Persia.

Now this substance accounts for the more serious effects of dādhi wine described by physicians. Ibn al-Baytar says the drinker feels hot, experiences flushed cheeks and feels stupefied the morning after. Besides, quoting al-Kindi, he says the drink causes dizziness, delirium, and acute sharp intestinal pain.... Furthermore, Ibn Sina warns of overindulgence, which might prove fatal (Nasrallah, 2007).

However, the matter is far from settled, and other psychoactive substances may account for the mysterious dādhi. Another possibility for dādhi has been suggested as wormwood, which can produce *thujone* when prepared with alcohol, a chemical which goes to the same receptors in the brain as cannabis. Ibn al Baytar, says it was known as the misk al-jinn, musk of demons. "The devastating mental effects of dādhi wine such as delirium, hallucinations ... might be attributed to the chemical compounds present in wormwood, thujone..." (Nasrallah, 2007). Henbane seeds were also used in wines, and it is important to remember that some medieval Muslim authors used the term binj, which was often used for cannabis, as a name for henbane, and this accounts for the deadly effects described for cannabis in some accounts from this period.

The Hashish-Takers

The Nizari "Assassins" represent yet another schism in a chain of Islamic sects that sprung from pre-existing cults while still managing to maintain certain Islamic and even pre-Islamic tenets and beliefs. The Nizari Assassins first appeared in the late eleventh century as an offshoot of the Isma'ili, a split which was again the result of a hereditary dispute over claim to the title of Imam, with this sect forming around the 11th century heir designate Nizar. They called themselves "Nizaris" or "Fida'i," meaning the "faithful ones." But, to other Muslims they were known as the "hashishiyyum," a derogatory term meaning "hashish taker," which linguistically developed into "Assassin" as legends of the cult spread to Europe. "...Muslim historians, mainly from the thirteenth century, ... use the term hashishiyya in reference to the Nizaris of Syria (al-Sham); while the Nizaris of Persia are called hashishis in some Caspian Zaydi texts" (Daftary, 1992). "There can be no doubt that the use of hemp as an intoxicant was encouraged by the Ismailians in the 8th century, as its effects tended to assist their followers in realizing the tenets of the sect"(Dymock, 1893).

Some researchers, such as James Wasserman, in *The Templars and the Assassins*, argue that the name Hashishin and the association with hashish, only came upon the Fida'i , via the accusations of their detractors who had deep concerns about the covert activities of the group and "there is no historical evidence that any fidai was ever given any drug or intoxicant" (Wasserman, 2001).

> Nizari secrecy led to widespread accusations against them that rose to whatever level of imagination the accuser could summon. Like modern urban legends of Satanic cults and antigovernment extremist bogeyman, the Assassins became the dark embodiment of the shadow self of Islam. They were accused of drug taking and licentious sexual orgies. Unlimited powers of mind control were ascribed to Assassin leaders, whose zombie-like disciples were considered either too stupid, too brainwashed, or too drug-addled to resist the manipulative, charismatic power of the sect leaders. Nizari leaders were said to follow no law but their own and be willing to stoop to any death, including witchcraft, to mislead their flock. The Sunni establishment accused them of plotting to undermine Islamic law and to renew the ancient pagan faith of Persia – the dualist doctrines of Zoroaster... (Wasserman, 2001).

However, as we shall see, there is a plethora of historical evidence indicating cannabis use by the Hashishin. The references from Omar Khayyam, indicate that his close childhood friend, Hassan I. Sabbah, the first "Old Man of the Mountain," would have been familiar with hashish by proxy alone. Further elements of the Zoroastrian cosmology inherent with the beliefs of the Hashishin, indicate that the mystic use of hashish had come through Persian Zoroastrian sources, which had a history of mystic use of cannabis-infused wines, and were the carriers of this earlier tradition.

The origin of the term "Hashishin" has been a matter of much debate. "The etymology of the word 'Assassin' is said to come from Hashishin, i.e. hashish-taker. It was transmitted through the Romance language by the Crusaders who in the 12th century, fearful of this sect, associated their daring killings with the power of the drug" (Palgi, 1975). Although some authorities see an origin for the name through "Hashish" an Arabic word thought to mean "grass" or "herbage," others claim the name "Hashashin" is derived from the Persian "hassasin," which holds connotations of "healer" or "herb seller." Still others see the origins of the name coming though "followers of Hassan" in reference to a prominent figure in the cult, Hassan I. Sabbah, who was known variously as the "Old Man of the Mountain," "Shiek of Alamut," and "Keeper of Hashish." Adding to this, as we are dealing with a hereditary cult, one could also speculate that an etymological connection might be found in the name of the tribe Muhammad came from, "Hashim."

> [T]he nickname, and with it, the drug's extended use, appear to have surfaced during the late eleventh century, and both may have been promoted by the real or alleged use of cannabis by sectarians who were engaged in spreading a vast network of open and secret influence over the Muslim world... (Rosenthal, 1971).

Joseph Freiherr von Hammer-Purgstall suggested that cannabis was a key component of the secret knowledge of the Ismailis, and at first was carefully concealed from outsiders, and it only later became known to wider Islamic culture in his classic *The History of the Assassins: Derived from Oriental Sources*,

> At the epoch of the Ismailitic power, these intoxicating preparations were not yet known in the Moslem countries. It was only at a later period, the knowledge of it was brought from the eastern regions, probably even from India into the Persian provinces. Thence it was communicated to the Musulmans of Mesopotamia, Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt. No doubt, the Ismailites, whose doctrines had several points of resemblance with those of Indians, had acquired this knowledge earlier, and preserved it as a precious secret, and as one of the principal springs of their power. This conjecture is supported by the fact, that one of the most celebrated Arabian writers attributes the introduction amongst the

> Egyptians, of an electuary prepared from hemp, to a Persian Ismalite (von Hammer-Purgstall, 1835).[5]

Von Hammer-Purgstall, also gave an eloquent explanation of the etymological connections between Assassin and Hashish, and answered the challenges raised by those who chalenged the terms' common linguistic roots.

> ...I have no doubt whatever that denomination [Hashishin] was given to the Ismailites, on account of their using an intoxicating liquid, or preparation, still known in the east by the name of Hashish. Hemp leaves, and some other parts of the same vegetable form the basis of this preparation; which is employed in different ways, either in liquid, or in the form of pastilles, mixed with saccharine substances; or even fumigation.... Those who indulge in this custom, are, to this day, called Hashishin... (von Hammer-Purgstall, 1835).

The Hashishin clearly considered themselves the guardians of sacred knowledge and tradition, and this is evident in some of the other names the sect has been known under such as "Batiniyya," meaning the "esoterics" and from their detractors, "Malahida," "the heretics." Usually based in mountain fortresses, such as the famous Alamut, between the 11th and 13th centuries the Hashishin spread from Persia into Syria, central Asia and India, using assassination as only one of a number of methods of achieving their aims.

The first European account of the Assassins came from the chronicler and Benedictine abbot, Arnold of Lübeck recorded sometime around 1209.

> In those days Conrad King of Jerusalem was killed by the treachery, it is said, of the king of England and of some Templars. At any rate the prince of the mountain, who is called Old Man on account of his supremacy, sent for a price two of his followers, who killed him. I shall now relate things about this elder which appear ridiculous, but which are attested to me by the evidence of reliable witnesses. This Old Man has by his witchcraft so bemused the men of his country, that they neither worship nor believe in any God but himself. Likewise he entices them in a strange manner with such hopes and with promises of such pleasures with eternal enjoyment that they prefer to die than to live. Many of them even, when standing on a high wall, will jump off at his nod or command, and, shattering their skulls, die a miserable death. When therefore any of them have chose to die in this way, murdering by craft and then themselves dying so blessedly in revenge for him, he himself hands them knives which are, so to speak, consecrated to this affair, and then intoxicates them with such potion that

> they are plunged into ecstasy and oblivion, displays them by his magic certain fantastic dreams, full of pleasure and delights, or rather of trumpery, and promises them eternal possession of these things in reward for such deeds. He sent two from this sect to kill the marquis, bribed it is said, by those who conspired in his death. He died and they died, but I do not know whether or not they were deified (Arnold of Lübeck Chronica Slavorum 4.16).[6]

Prior to the fall of the Assassins, came the legendary and sensationalized 13th century account of them by Marco Polo. He recorded that novices being initiated into the sect were alleged to have been tricked through the use of hashish and a hidden garden within the mountain top castle of the Assassins in Alamut, into believing they had received a foretaste of the Afterlife Paradise described in the Koran:

> The Old Man was called in their language ALOADIN. He had caused a certain valley between two mountains to be enclosed, and had turned it into a garden, the largest and most beautiful that ever was seen, filled with every variety of fruit. In it were erected pavilions and palaces the most elegant that can be imagined, all covered with gilding and exquisite painting. And there were runnels too, flowing freely with wine and milk and honey and water; and numbers of ladies and of the most beautiful damsels in the world, who could play on all manner of instruments, and sung most sweetly, and danced in a manner that it was charming to behold. For the Old Man desired to make his people believe that this was actually Paradise. So he had fashioned it after the description that Mahommet gave of his Paradise, to wit, that it should be a beautiful garden running with conduits of wine and milk and honey and water, and full of lovely women for the delectation of all its inmates. And sure enough the Saracens of those parts believed that it was Paradise!
>
> Now no man was allowed to enter the Garden save those whom he intended to be his ASHISHIN [Assassin, a corruption of Hashishin]. There was a Fortress at the entrance to the Garden, strong enough to resist all the world, and there was no other way to get in. He kept at his Court a number of the youths of the country, from 12 to 20 years of age, such as had a taste for soldiering, and to these he used to tell tales about Paradise, just as Mahommet had been wont to do, and they believed in him just as the Saracens believe in Mahommet. Then he would introduce them into his garden, some four, or six, or ten at a time, having first made them drink a certain potion which cast them into a deep sleep, and then causing them to be lifted and carried in. So when

> they awoke, they found themselves in the Garden.
>
> When therefore they awoke, and found themselves in a place so charming, they deemed that it was Paradise in very truth. And the ladies and damsels dallied with them to their hearts' content, so that they had what young men would have; and with their own good will they never would have quitted [sic] the place.
>
> Now this Prince whom we call the Old One kept his Court in grand and noble style, and made those simple hill-folks about him believe firmly that he was a great Prophet. And when he wanted one of his Ashishin to send on any mission, he would cause that potion whereof I spoke to be given to one of the youths in the garden, and then had him carried into his Palace. So when the young man awoke, he found himself in the Castle, and no longer in that Paradise; whereat he was not over well pleased. He was then conducted to the Old Man's presence, and bowed before him with great veneration as believing himself to be in the presence of a true Prophet. The Prince would then ask whence he came, and he would reply that he came from Paradise! and that it was exactly such as Mahommet had described it in the Law. This of course gave the others who stood by, and who had not been admitted, the greatest desire to enter therein.
>
> So when the Old Man would have any Prince slain, he would say to such a youth: "Go thou and slay So and So; and when thou returnest my Angels shall bear thee into Paradise. And shouldst thou die, nonetheless even so will I send my Angels to carry thee back into Paradise." So he caused them to believe; and thus there was no order of his that they would not affront any peril to execute, for the great desire they had to get back into that Paradise of his. And in this manner the Old One got his people to murder any one whom he desired to get rid of. Thus, too, the great dread that he inspired all Princes withal, made them become his tributaries in order that he might abide at peace and amity with them (Marco Polo, 1300).[7]

Another potential reference can be found in *The Decameron* (1353), Giovanni Boccaccio's bawdy classic, which "refers at one point to the 'Old Man of the Mountain', and to some mysterious potion, but Boccaccio never identifies the drug by name: 'he sought out a powder of marvelous virtue which he had gotten in the parts of the Levant of a great prince who avouched it to be that which was wont to be used by the 'Old Man of the Mountain' when he would fain send anyone sleeping into paradise" (Abel, 1980).

Neither Lubeck's, Polo's nor Boccaccio's accounts refer to hashish directly. However, as we have shown, there is ample evidence that cannabis was known in the Persian region, and although these early European descriptions only identified a potion and a powder, the similarity to the cannabis-infused wines of the Zoroastrians is clear. "De Sacy seems to have proved that they were called Hashishiya or Hashishin, from their use of the preparation of hemp called Hashish; and thence, through their system of murder and terrorism, came the modern application of the word Assassin"(Yule, 1920).

It should be remembered that Marco Polo's and other European accounts were based on myths and half truths that grew around the Assassins, who were considered heretics by orthodox Islam and Crusaders alike. The ruins of the Assassins' castle still exist, and no evidence of a hidden garden as described have been found. Thus Antoine Sylvestre de Sacy's early 19th-century account was likely a little closer to the mark:

> [T]here might be some exaggeration in the Venetian travelers account ... rather than believe in the existence of enchanted gardens ... we should reduce all the wonders of that magnificent place to a phantom produced by the exalted imagination of young men intoxicated with hashish, who, from their infancy, had been nursed with this idea of happiness, it would be no less true that we find here the idea of a liquor to deaden the senses, and we cannot forget that its use or abuse is spread throughout a great part of Asia and Africa. At the time of Ismaili power these intoxicating preparations were not yet known in Moslem countries. It was only later that knowledge of them was brought from the eastern regions, perhaps from India, into the Persian provinces. From there it was communicated to the Moslems of Asia Minor, Mesopotamia, Syria, and Egypt. No doubt the Ismailis, whose doctrine had several points of resemblance with those of the Indian, had acquired this knowledge earlier and preserved it as a precious secret, one of the main sources of their power... (de Sacy, 1809).

As we have shown in this study, cannabis has a long and ancient history in many of the places de Sacy refers to as not knowing it; however the 19th-century scholar was correct in noting that cultural influences likely resulted in the Islamic paradise-themed visions of the Assassins, in the same way the mythology of the Zoroastrian religion affected the partakers of mang. As well, de Sacy correctly pointed to the inherent similarities between the cosmologies of the Persian Isma'ili and Indian influences.

However de Sacy slips into the association of hashish with heinous murders. But, from what we know of hashish's role in Islam, it seems much more likely that the hashish was used as an initiatory substance, directed at invoking a mystical experience, rather than inducing a frenzied state of murderous rage for assassination as has been suggested.

> The drug employed for initiation into the cult was used to obtain a vision of paradise. It did not nerve them up for slaughter, was not used during their missions and did not make them crazy. Quite the contrary, it ... gave them at least a fleeting glimpse of an altogether higher order of existence. If anything, political and religious intrigue, not hashish, caused assassination (Aldrich, 1978).

The initiatory hierarchal structure of the Old Man of the Mountains' Assassins has often been taken as a prototype for later secret societies, and there have been many claims about a connection between the Templars and Hashishins. Oliver Bland gives us some idea of how the order was viewed by late 19th-century and early 20th-century occultists:

> The master of the Assassins was a master hypnotist, using the dark knowledge of certain parts of the mechanical ritual of magic to gain his mastery over the Moslem youths he sent as fanatics to do his bidding.
>
> There in the Lebanon he created his artificial paradise of sensuous delight, drugged dreams and slumber. His commands laid upon his slaves were no ordinary commands, but spells as black as any weaved by sorcery.
>
> The master lodge of this cult of the Assassins was – at Cairo and the mysteries were only transferred to, their new setting in the Lebanon by Hassan ibn Sabbah at the end of the eleventh century. Outwardly Moslem, the inner mysteries had no connection with either Mohammedan or any other religion, and indeed the cult seems to be in many ways a kind of bastard Masonic organization (Bland, 1920).

The idea that there is an Islamic influence on Freemasonry and later European secret societies is well known, and numbers of books have been written demonstrating this. Both Sufis and the Hashishin have been referred to specifically in this regard. Elements of this can be seen even among modern Masons and Shriners, through both names of grades and Arabic dress. As the 19th- and early 20th-century occult writer, Arthur Edward Waite, wrote in *A New Encyclopedia of Freemasonry*: "According to Godfrey Higgins [1772-1833], this sect was neither more nor less than an oriental Freemasonry, and Von Hammer [1774-1856] is so unwise as to suggest that they were Apprentices, Fellows and Masters in the Grades of reception and advancement" (Waite, 1921). As Tim Wallace-Murphy has noted of the Sufi influence in *The Enigma of the*

Freemasons: Their History and Mystical Connections:

> According to Sir Richard Burton, "Sufi-ism [was] the Eastern parent of Freemasonry." (See, F. Hitchman, Burton, Volume 1, p. 286). Robert Graves claimed that Freemasonry first began as a Sufi society that reached England in the guise of a craft guild during the reign of King Athelstan (ruled 924-939), and was then introduced into Scotland. He describes the Sufic origins of the Craftmasons' guilds and the part played by Templar teaching and tradition in the transformation of these guilds into Freemasonry (Wallace-Murphy, 2006).

Sufis

Quite early on, the use of hashish seems to have spread to other mystically-inclined members of the Islamic faith, such as the Sufis.

> [T]here can be little doubt that hashish was rather widely employed by ... [Sufis] as a ... aid for achieving enlargement of the individual's ... spiritual perceptions. By tasting the "secret" and the "meaning" of hashish, Sufis ... hoped to gain ... mystic experience ... they made ... the use of the drug "an act of worship" ... (Rosenthal, 1971).

According to legend, hashish was first introduced to the Sufis by the Persian Isma'ili Shayk Haydar (1155-1221) and some have even claimed Haydar (also Haidar) was also the source of the penetration of cannabis in the Islamic world (Houtsma, et al., 1936/1993). A 13th-century account from Hassan Mohammed ibn-chirazi, describes this mythical "discovery" of hashish by the Sufi leader:

> The Year 658 [A.D. 1260], being at Tuster, I asked Sheik Hirazi, monk of the order Haidar, on what occasion they discovered the properties of the herb of the devotees, and how, after being adopted by the devotees in particular, it had afterward come into general usage. Here is what he told me.
>
> Haidar, chief of all the sheiks, practiced many exercises of devotion and mortification: he took to little nourishment, carried to a surprising extent detachment from all worldly things, and was of an extraordinary piety. He was born at Nichapur, a city of Khorasan, and he made his home on a neighbouring mountain. There he established a convent, and a great number of devotees came together around him. He lived alone in a corner of this convent, and spent more than ten years in this manner, never going out, and never seeing anyone at all except me, when I was acting as his servant. One day when it was very hot, at the hour of the greatest heat, the sheik walked out alone into the countryside, and when he later returned to the convent, we saw an expression of joy and gaiety very different to what we were accustomed to see there: he allowed his fellow devotees to come and visit him and began to converse with them. When we saw the sheik so humanized and conversing familiarly with us, after being so long in an absolute retreat without any communication with men, we asked him the cause for this surprising effect.
>
> "While I was in my retreat," he replied, "It occurred to my spirit to go alone into the countryside. When I had done so I noticed that all the plants were in perfect calm, not experiencing the least agitation, because of the extreme heat untempered by the

slightest breath of wind. But passing by a certain plant covered with foliage I observed that, that in that air, it was moving softly from side to side with a soft light movement, like a man dizzied by the fume of wine. I began to gather the leaves of this plant and too eat them, and they have produced in me the gaiety that you witness . Come with me, then, that I may teach you to know it."

So we followed him into the countryside, and he showed us that plant. We told him, on seeing it, that it is the plant they call Hemp. On his orders, we took the leaves of this plant and we ate them, and once back at the convent experienced in ourselves the same gay, joyous disposition that he had found impossible to hide from us. When the Sheik found us in that state, he charged us to keep secret the discovery we had just made of the plants virtues and made us an oath never to reveal it to ordinary men and never to hide it from Religious men.

"God almighty," he told us,"has granted you, as to a special favor, an awareness of the virtues of this leaf, so that your use of it will dissipate the cares that obscure your souls and free your spirits from everything that might hamper them. Keep carefully, then, the deposit he has confided in you, and be faithful in hiding the precious secret he has committed to you."

Sheik Haidar thus made known to us this secret during his life, and ordered me to sow the plant around his tomb after his death, so I cultivated it in the convent. The Sheik lived for ten more years after this event; during all the time I remained in his service not a day went by where he did not use this leaf, and he recommended to us to eat little food and to take the Herb instead. Sheik Haidar died in the convent in the mountain in the year 618 [A.D. 1221]. They erected over his tomb a great chapel, and the inhabitants of Khorasan, full of veneration for his memory, came there on pilgrimage, bringing many presents to fulfill their vows and developing a great respect for his disciples. Before his death he had recommended to his companions to tell their secret to the most distinguished people of the province, and by instructing them of the virtues of the plant they adopted its use. Thus hashish rapidly spread in Khorasan and in the various departments of Fars province, but they knew nothing of its use in Iraq until the year 628 [A.D. 1231], in the reign of Calif Mustansir. At that time, two Princes, whose states were among the maritime countries situated on the Persian coast, the Sovereign of Ormuz, and the Prince of Bahrain, having come into Iraq, men of their retinue brought with them some hashish and taught the Iraqis to eat it. The drug spread in Iraq, and the people of Syria, Egypt and the lands of Rum, having heard tell of it, took up the use of it.[8]

In relation to the discussion of hashish-infused wines, it is worth noting that it has been reported: "A tincture of hemp leaves in wine or spirit seems to have been the favorite formula in which Sheikh Haidar indulged himself" (Dymock, 1885). "Haidar, like the Hindu priests 2,000 years before him, recommended that his followers conceal from the people the divine properties of this precious herb. But such secrets cannot be kept for centuries, and after his death his disciples extolled the wonderful qualities of the 'magic' plant: 'Abandon wine, take the cup of Haidar, this cup which has the fragrance of amber and sparkles like a green emerald'" (Nahas, 1982).

As Ahmet Karamustafa notes in his excellent *God's Unruly Friends: Dervish Groups in the Islamic Later Middle Period, 1200-1550*, Sufi groups that formed around the teachings of Shayk Qalandar and Shayk Haydar were criticized for their traditional pre-Islamic Persian influences. In 761/1359-60 a decree was issued which "forbade the Qalandars to shave and dress in the manner of Iranians and magi.... In the Syrian and Egyptian cultural spheres, the Qalandariyah appears to have continued throughout the seventh-eighth/thir-teenth-four-teenth centuries mostly as an Iranian group... also the Haydariyah ... were viewed as foreign, predominantly Iranian, phenomena" (Karamustafa, 2006).

Another 19th century Persian scholar, Edward G. Browne, noted in *A Chapter from the History of Cannabis Indica*, that use of hemp preparations in the area extended from Zoroastrian times to the 19th century, where its use was still deeply cloaked in the Isma'ilian mystical beliefs about the plant:

> ...Cannabis Indica ... appears to have been known in Persia in very early times, as students of the ancient Zoroastrian scriptures assert, allusion is made to it in the Avesta.... At the present day it is extensively used here ... as the inspirer of the wildest pantheistic speculations, the most disordered metaphysical phantasies, and the most incredible visions and ecstasies. It is known generally as hashish – an Arabic word meaning cut grass or dried herbs, – or by its Persian name, bang. Besides these there are special preparations known by special names, such as chars, barsh, [related to barsom?] and hub-i-nishat, or "pills of delight," of which preparations the first is smoked, the last two eaten.... At present as I am informed by one of my Persian friends, the method most fashionable amongst the dervishes of Tehran is to employ the bug-i-wahadat, or "trumpet of unity." A small piece of paper or cardboard is rolled up into the shape of a funnel, of which the smaller end of the funnel is placed in the mouth. A piece of chars, laid

> on the lighted end of a cigarette, is then held under the larger end of the funnel, and the smoke of the burning hemp is then inhaled. The effects of the drug are produced much more rapidly when it is smoked than when it is eaten. Subjectively it produces an extraordinary dislocation of the ideas of times, space and personality ... it seems that all those present in the assembly are in reality animated by one spirit and that the barricades of personality and individuality are, in some inexplicable way, broken down. It is this sensation or illusion which is specially craved after by the dervishes, who find therein a foretaste of Nirvana, or Absorption into the Universal Spirit, which is the aim of their pantheistic mysticism to attain; and this is the "unity" alluded to in the name of the bug-i-wahadat of which I have spoken (Browne, 1897).

The sense of ego-obliteration, or what one medieval hashish-using poet saw as the "removal from existence in existence," possible with cannabis preparations, as in the case of the bug-i-wahadatin in the description above, was likened to a mortal death in medieval literature. This was also true of the use of hashish itself, which had to be sacrificed, i.e. eaten, to have an effect; "puns on the term 'to kill' [were] used in connection with the preparation and use of hashish.... [A] play upon the 'killing' of hashish ... is apparently the case in a verse stating that 'the green one' is 'a hashishah that makes every man a hashishi (assassin) unbeknown to himself'" (Rosenthal, 1971).

Such future-worldly and "pantheistic" associations with cannabis amongst the Persian Hashishin and Sufis as those cited above, have clear parallels in the preceding Zoroastrian religion. This connection also seems the likely source, considering the similar shamanic use of cannabis and the evidence that the consumption of mang- (hemp) laced Haoma or wine was likely carried on by the Sasanian priesthood and royalty right up until the fall of their Empire to Islam. It has been suggested that the introduction of hashish into Islam may have come via Zoroastrians secretly hiding as Sufis during periods where conversion to Islam was made mandatory with a death penalty for those that refused. A Zoroastrian influence on the Assassins was noted early on by Islamic author al-Busti (1029 A.D.), who traced Isma'ilian beliefs to "Iranian dualistic and Zoroastrian origins" (Daftary, 2004).

Haoma and the Hashishins?

Zoroastrian roots for the Islamic use of cannabis and its resinous products seems the most likely source of the tradition. As Dr. Mike Aldrich has commented in regard to Sarianidi's find of cannabis evidence at the Soma temple in BMAC, and the later Hashishin, "this may have been what the assassins were using.... Its a very interesting progression then across the Middle East, from Soma originally, to possibly the legend of the Assassins and the idea of using potions that were made out of cannabis in order to induce transcendental states, higher states of consciousness" (Aldrich, 2012). In relation it is interesting to point out that it has long been suggested that the "hymns of Zoroaster ... particularly the Haoma Yasht ... might supply a source ... of the hasheesh ... of the Assassins..." (Bramhall, 1918).

Referring to the Ismaili's syncretic connections between Islam and Zoroastrianism, Claude Reignier Conder commented that up until his time "The ... Ism'ailiyeh preserve the grades of initiation, allegorical interpretation of the Koran, beliefs in transmigration, and a sacred libation (the Haoma). The lower orders believe in the worship of sun, moon, and stars, and celebrate (it is said) annual orgies of a phallic character" (Conder, 1886). As Lyttle's 1883 edition of *The Living Age* similarly recorded of the sect:

> The Ismalleh sect ... are a medieval remnant of the medieval assassins or "hemp smokers" (Hashishisn).... The old Haoma ritual still survives among these heretics, together with a veneration of the sun, moon and planets, and stars, which is most probably of Persian derivation (Lyttle, 1883).

Another interesting factor regarding the Islamic use of hashish and the Haoma tradition, is that at least until the late-19th century, there is an account of a cannabis beverage under the name of "Homa" that was being taken in Syria by the Nosairiyeh tribesmen, a group often confused with the Isma'ilis by historians due to some similarities in belief (although the two sects have feuded for hundreds of years). Indeed, the above 19th-century references of Lyttle and Conder may be evidence of this confusion between the two related sects, who may have been connected centuries ago, as "...modern scholarship ... has come to see the Nusa'iri ... as offshoots of twelfth-century ... Isma'ilism..." (Deveney, 1997).

An account of the Nosairyeh's cannabis fueled Homa ritual was recorded by an anonymous author in an 1895, March 15th edition of the *New York Herald*, under the sensational title "The Orgies of the Hemp Eaters." Peter Lamborn Wilson (aka Hakim Bey), who uses the same title for his own tome celebrating cannabis in the East, initially thought the author may have been the 19th-century hashish adept, Dr Paschal Beverly Randolph. Randolph had been initiated by the sect, but as he had been dead for years by the time "The Orgies of the Hemp Eaters" came into print, this was unlikely. Wilson favored Albert Rawson, an early traveling companion of Helena Blavatsky, who was another "New York hashisheen, occultist, 33 degree Freemason, one of the founders of the Mystic order of the Shrine (the "Shriners"), and claimant of Middle Eastern initiations. (Both Rawson and Helena boasted Druze connections). Rawson probably met Randolph, he traveled in the East in the 1860s ... he makes a much more likely candidate for the author ... than Randolph, since he was still alive when the article appeared" (Bey, 2004).

The Orgies of the Hemp Eaters (excerpts)

> The festival or gathering of the hemp eaters is celebrated monthly, at the time of the full moon, the moon being then supposed to exert a specific influence upon human beings. The sectaries meet under a sacred oak tree growing upon a hill...
>
> Now the Nosarriyeh seat themselves in a circle upon the earth, the Shiekh in the center, with an attendant on either hand, one holding a large earthenware bowl containing a liquid, the other a bundle of stems to which leaves are attached – the leaves of the sacred hemp plant. The chief takes the stems in his left and the bowl in his right hand and slowly walks around the circle, stopping in front of each man present, who takes from him, first the greenery, at which he sniffs gently, then the bowl, the contents of which he sips. The vessel contains a sweetened infusion of hemp, strong and subtle in its action.
>
> WHAT THE DECOCTION IS LIKE
>
> The taste of the decoction is sweet, nauseously so ... and its first effects are anything but pleasant, for it produces a distinct tendency to vomit.... As soon as all have in succession partaken of the drink, which is termed "homa," big horns are produced containing spirits, for the Nosarriyeh are great dram drinkers. The horns of liquor are passed about and in a few moments the effects are apparent, following upon the hemp. The eyes brighten, the pulse quickens, the blood seems to bound more actively in the veins, and a restlessness takes possession of the whole body (1895).

Orthodox Muslims of the 11th and 12th centuries saw the name Nosairiyeh as being derived from "Nasarini," meaning "little Christians" and considered them a remnant of the heretical ancient Christian Gnostic sects. The Nosairiyeh, or Ansayree (minus the elision of "N") can still be found in isolated mountainous areas of Syria, as well as in areas of Palestine, Kurdistan, Egypt and Iran. "What has mainly set the Nusa'iris apart and made them the object of persecution and massacre by more orthodox Muslims ... and Crusaders alike is the belief that they practiced the pagan and Gnostic sexual rites of antiquity" (Deveney, 1997). Writing in the mid- 19th century Habeeb Risk Allah Effendi commented:

> By some ... the Nosairiyeh are considered to be an aboriginal tribe, which has survived the many changes that have swept over the country, and have preserved such peculiar traits as distinguish them from all other inhabitants.... I am inclined to believe that this is the case; and I am also disposed to regard them as probably a sect of heretical Christians, who

> having originally retired among the mountains to secure the free exercise of their opinions, thus became isolated... (Effendi, 1854).

Referring to "The Nusiereh," Lyttle noted that some "have identified them with the Manichean Gnostics, but the points of resemblance are more probably due to the Persian origins of many of the tenets of Manes... [T]hey themselves connect their mystic Eucharist with the Christian rite, as well as with the 'veiling of the Lord in light that is in the eye of the Sun'" (Lyttle, 1887). Conder also commented on the Nosairiyeh's mixing of the Zoroastrian and Christian traditions, noting that sect still preserves "this curious syncretic system with a Eucharistic supper, and a ceremony of "consecrating the Fragrant Herb, probably originating in the Haoma worship of the Persians" (Conder, 1886). From the Zoroastrian-influenced Christian Gnostic texts of the Nag Hammadi Library discussed earlier we can see this mixing of traditions went back very far indeed.

With its full-moon date, ritualistic connotations and animal sacrifice, along with the use of a hemp-infused beverage, there are strong indications that this 19th-century celebration is in fact a debased form of the ancient Haoma ritual, passed down by uncultured and illiterate tribesmen from generation to generation, confused by the advent and influence of Christianity and Islam, causing it to slowly shed the pomp and glory of ancient times, along with the meaning of its forgotten past and origins.

Hakim Bey notes that the most fascinating aspect of the Orgies of the Hemp Eaters is the use of the word "Homa," noting the possibility that a "Zoroastrian influence – or even more intriguing, the possible survival of an ancient Indo-European word in its original meaning ... in India Cannabis has in some sense become a kind of Soma, prepared by modern-day saddhus and nagas according to a method already ancient in the time of the Rig Veda" (Bey, et al., 2004).

> And in the Veda, the pressed-out juices of the Soma plant are sometimes described as green-tinted. "Orgies of the Hemp Eaters," therefore, may offer some evidence for the continual existence of a Cannabis/Haoma cult beginning perhaps 7000 years ago and continuing into the Islamic period and even today – thus making it one of the oldest unbroken spiritual traditions of humankind (Bey, et al., 2004).

The Green One

As Haoma was both a plant and a god in the Zoroastrian tradition, it is interesting to note that in medieval Islam a magical saint came to be the personification of hashish. As Franz Rosenthal explains cannabis' "green color enabled hashish to claim the famous al-Khidr 'the green one' as its patron saint" (Rosenthal, 1971). As recorded by the medieval poet Fuzuli, both Hashish and Khizr shared the epithet of the "Green One," and Sufi Mystics referred to the use of hashish as the "visit of the green Khidr," (Rosenthal, 1971). As J.M. Campbell recorded of Khizr's relationship with cannabis in his classic 1894 essay, "On the Religion of Hemp":

> In his devotion to bhang, with reverence, not with the worship, which is due to Allah alone, the North Indian Mussulman joins hymning to the praise of bhang. To the follower of the later religion of Islam the holy spirit in bhang is not the spirit of the Almighty, it is the spirit of the great prophet Khizr, or Elijah. That bhang should be sacred to Khizr is natural, Khizr is the patron saint of water. Still more Khizr means green, the revered color of the cooling water of bhang. So the Urdu poet sings: "When I quaff fresh bhang I liken its color to the fresh light down of thy youthful beard." The prophet Khizr or the green prophet cries "May the drink be pleasing to thee" (Campbell, 1894).

Khizr represented occult knowledge and was seen as "the initiator of Sufis who have no human master" (Wilson, 1993). Interestingly, there are legends of Khizr, that, like the vegetation gods of the ancient world, was dismembered and reborn. As well, certain prophecies connect him with the end of time and the revealing of esoteric truths. With Khizr's association with fertility, immortality, inspiration, and cannabis, it is hard not to see Khizr as the Islamic counterpart of the spirit of Haoma-Soma.

In relation to fertility rites, such as those alleged to have been carried on from ancient times by the cannabis-consuming Nosairiyeh tribesmen in Syria, it is interesting to note that Khizr has also been compared to the Syrian "Tammuz, well known as the 'Dying God' of vegetation; comparable in many respects with Soma," (Coomaraswammy, 1989). In the essay "Sir Gawain and the Green Knight: Indra and Namuci," by Ananda Kentish Coomaraswamy, besides bringing in an often-commented Arthurian connection, pointed out that "As a plant or tree Soma must have been green. In SA. xi Brahma is as it were 'a great green tree' (the Tree of Life)" a fact he equates with Khidr (the Green One), who "is green himself, The earth grows green under his feet at every step" (Coomaraswamy, 1944). Coomaraswamy returned to this theme in later writings:

> Khizr is at home in both worlds, the dark and the light, but above all the master of the flowing River of Life in the Land of Darkness: he is at once the guardian of genius and vegetation and of the Water of Life, and corresponds to Soma ... in Vedic mythology...
>
> In the Quran ... occurs the legend of Musa's search for the Ma'jma 'al-Bahrain, which is probably to be understood as a "place" in the far west at the meeting of the two oceans; Musa is guided by a "servant of God," whom the commentators identify with al-Khidr, whose island is said to be upon an island or a green carpet in the midst of the sea. This story can be traced back to ... older sources ... In the Gilgamesh epic the hero sets out in search of his immortal ancestor' Utanpishtim who dwells at the mouth of the rivers ... his object being to be informed with respect to the "plant of life," prototype of the Avestan Haoma, Vedic Soma, whereby man can be saved from death (Coomaraswamy, 1989).

Peter Lamborn Wilson (Bey) also noted a connection between Khizr and Soma, suggesting that there was an Arthurian connection, a view shared by Coomarasamy, and that the mythologies of both Khizr and Soma, inspired European "Legends of the Grail":

> The Fountain of Youth in the legend of Khizr and Alexander is guarded by an Angel. Khizr inadvertently "steals" the water and becomes immortal. In the Satapatha-Brahamana ... Soma is associated with a pool that restores youth. The text ... refers to "undecaying and immortal vital energy" that is drawn into the bowl as Soma. The Grail is guarded by a maimed king, who is thus structurally related to all the deformed Soma-demons ("...If the King (Soma) becomes exhausted, they extend him from out of [the bowl]" ... and must be stolen by the Grail-knight, who is therefore the same as Indra or Hercules. Indeed, if the Grail mythos can be traced to Persian sources, to the "Cup of Jamshid," in which distant events appear by a sort of televisual magic, then the Grail may be considered not only structurally but also historically related to Iranian Haoma, or rather to its ritual cup or basin (Wilson, 1999).

The "Cup of Jamshid," was the sacred cup of kings, used for divination purposes, and with the references to the golden cups used to drink "mang" (cannabis), by Zoroastrian figures, for identical divinatory purposes, it is by no means a stretch to suggest that there is such a connection here, a situation we shall explore more in Chapter 4.

The Ritual of the Cup

Earlier we referred to the Nusayri tribesmen, and their established consumption of cannabis as "homa" into the 19th century. The Nusayri, are thought to be "offshoots of twelfth-century ... Isma'ilism..." (Deveney, 1997). (The Isma'ili being the same religion the Hashishin sprung from). The Nusayri also have also been shown to have been ideally persuaded by both Christian-Gnostic and Zoroastrian influences. Thus it is not surprising that here again, with this group we can find elements and references to sacred cups that parallel what we have been discussing in relation to the Grail and Jamishid's Cup.

Much is not known of the Nosairiyeh cosmology, as they were highly secretive, as were later European secret societies. "The Nusseiriyeh conceal their religion from the outer world with the greatest care, and do not even initiate their own sons into its mysteries until they have arrived at years of discretion; the women are never initiated at all" (Besant & Palmer, 1871).

The Nusayri still perform a rite known as the "ritual of the cup" involving the "wine of the Angelic world" (malakut). This Angelic world is analogous to the menog (spiritual realm) that Zoroastrian priests accessed with the aid of hemp-infused wine or Haoma. This ritual is directed at putting the partakers into contact with their ancestors and providing a means of connectivity to their shared heritage, and in a sense, achieving an experience of immortality. Indicating the fusion between Islamic, Biblical and Zoroastrian influences at its core, in the invocations of the ritual "an entire cycle of Iranian history ... is introduced alongside the cycles of Adam, Noah, Abraham, and Moses. Together, all heroes Mazdean and Abrahmic living in different cycles of history are each imagined in the shape of a dome. Time ... is imagined spatially. All inhabitants of these seven domes have already taken part in the Ritual" (Babayan, 2002).

> And when the drink has passed to all, then by this cup you hold in your hand, your bodies shall be filled for all periods and cycles to come. For you belong to the holy of holies, and you were of the Bahmanians [Iranians] (Corbin 1998).

As Kathryn Babayan explains: "[In]Nusayri circles as the disciple drinks from the cup, he is aware of his Iranian past, remembering that in every cycle of history brothers not only partook in this same act but were made of the same substance. Through this imitative process, the novice experiences reincarnation through the seven cycles of history" (Babayan, 2002). In the Nusayri liturgy, there "is a sense of alchemical correspondence between homologous individuals who lived in different cycles of time. Such beliefs enabled Shah Isma'il to claim the reincarnation of ... Kay Khusraw, Alexander, Jesus, Muhammad and Ali" (Babayan, 2002). As the liturgy describes:

> Behold this cup has circulated through the temple of the non-Arabs, throughout all the seven periods of the world. All of them are our brothers in faith and in Gnosis; through the drink you have tasted the knowledge of the Malakut [angelic world], the knowledge of that which was in the first of the centuries and is throughout all the ages and cycles of the world.... Having tasted of this drink, you know the language of the birds... (Corbin, 1998).

The Nusayri rite refers to "the language of the birds" and this is a term, as noted, that was used by both later Sufis and alchemists, to refer to a style of language directed at veiling hidden meaning with descriptive symbolism, for instance the poet Attar used the parrot as symbol for hashish, likely because of the gift of words, or poetic inspiration, associated with its use. In the Koran the understanding of the language of the birds was given to Solomon. In reference to the "knowledge of the Malakut," Henry Corbin notes that this "is the mystical boon given to the participant in this ritual of the cup. Its virtues are comparable with those of the Grail of Jamshid and of Kay Khusraw.... One might compare this with the blessings bestowed by the Holy Grail, as source of immortality..."(Corbin, 1998).

Khusraw, a figure of Persian mythical history, is particularly interesting. "In a work published in 1939, the Parsi Scholar Sir Jahangir C. Coyajee ... remarked upon ... the similarities between the legends of Arthur and those of the fabulous King Kay Khosraw" (Eliade, 1989). In *Guardians of the Grail,* Mark Amaru Pinkham, likewise noted the connections with the Zoroastrian hero, "King Kai Khosrow, a ruler whose court of devoted knights is recognized to be an earlier Persian counterpart to, and possibly inspiration for King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table. King Khorsow, who is said to have possessed a magical cup similar to the Holy Grail Chalice of legend, may have also provided the model for the character Percival, the principal protagonist of the European Holy Grail Mysteries," (Pinkham, 2004). Kay Khusraw "is often seen as a precursor to King Arthur, especially as he held the cup or grail of life" (Gardiner, 2008).

Kay Khusraw, like Jamshid, is a figure from Persian mythology, and both held the Cup of divination that was said to have been possessed by other rulers of ancient Persia. In relation to this, it is worth noting that the cannabis infused wine, used by Zoroastrian psychonauts, also retained the name of a Persian king, as it was referred to as mang-I Vistaspan, "mang" being a Pahlavi reference to cannabis, and Vistaspan, the name of the ancient Persian King Vistaspa, who converted to the prophet Zoroaster's new religion, after partaking of the mixture. The use of this substance was also associated with sacred cups. Arda

Viraf drinks "three gold cups with wine and 'Vistaspic' hemp (in other words hemp extract) ... has some time to thank consciousness, and then falls asleep on the gown. He sleeps for seven days and nights, and during this time his soul visits heaven and hell" (Nyberg, 1938).

Although no explicit references to cannabis occur in these more current accounts of the Nusayri's "ritual of the cup," based upon what we know about the sects past, its known use of cannabis in rituals into the late 19th century as "homa," as well as with the known Zoroastrian influence and the known use of cannabis-infused wines in ritual cups the connection seems clear in the origins of the rite at the very least.

Clearly, in regard to Islam's own relationship with cannabis, from both the use and mythology surrounding Hashish, we can be sure that the spiritual use of hemp was something the Moslem world inherited from the Persian Zoroastrians and their traditional use of Bhang-Haoma. Moreover, this exchange took place at the earliest stages of the Islamic religion, and has left a lasting impression, that still survives to the present day. As we shall see elements of the history and myth around the plant filtered into Europe, via the occult, as with books like *The Picatrix*, the alchemical works of Avicenna, Geber and other Sufi and Ismailian affiliated figures, and through the well known Islamic influence on Freemasons, Rosicrucians, and other Secret societies ... and most interestingly, in the myths and origins of the Holy Grail.

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[1] Dymock, offers the Persian version of the text, but failed to include the date and origins. (Dymock, 1890)

[2] (McCarthy, 1889).

[3] Chandra Ray described Soma "mixed with milk or dādhi (IX.71.8)" (Ray, 1939); although the term here does not seem to indicate an intoxicant, but rather a beverage of some form, and the Sanskrit term may hold a different meaning altogether.

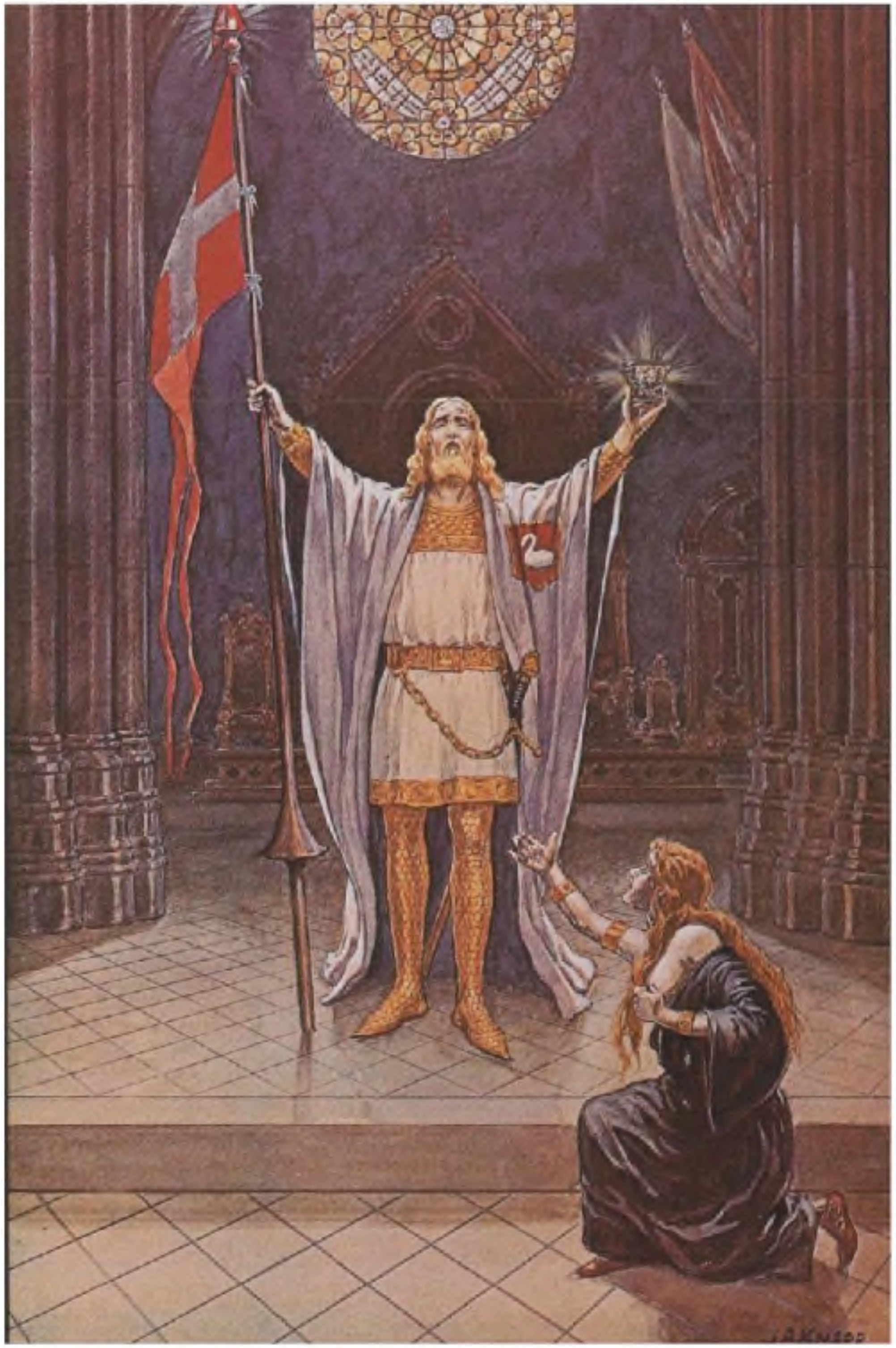
[4] This is likely another mythological explanation of how cannabis came to the Mid-East from India, as cannabis effects are not transferable to plain water.

[5] First published in French in 1818.

[6] As translated in (Pages, 2007).

[7] As translated in (Yule, 1920).

[8] Reprinted in (Kimmens, 1977).



CHAPTER 4

The Green Grail and the Elixir of Immortality

The Grail of Arthurian legend has come to represent many things, a golden chalice used to collect the blood of crucified Christ, a magic goblet that fulfills all desires, the bloodline of Jesus which can identify his descendants, the restoration of the erotic rites of ancient religion, symbolizing the unity of Christian and Pagan beliefs, through the Celtic influences from Bran's cup and many other interpretations. Here we will focus on the origins of the myth, the primordial image or archaic remnant, from which the symbol first arose, prior to the development of the later interpretations that came to be associated with the identity of the Grail. Moreover, we will also be looking at not so much the cup but what it contained and indeed we will find that sacred cups do have a long history with magically intoxicating substances. Through this we find that there may well be a connection to the earlier myths of Soma and Haoma, as earlier researchers have also shown.

At the time of the origins of the Arthurian Grail legends Europe was just emerging from a period widely known as the Dark Ages, and under strict Catholic domination. With the loss of trade routes for various reasons, the Western world had fallen out of contact and influence of much of the Mid-East, India and Asia, and this included a loss of much of the collected knowledge of the ancient world. Compiling with this, anything that conflicted with the holy scriptures and the Church's view of the Bible, fell into the hands of the censors. However, a thousand years without the coming of the promised savior led to doubts in the Church amongst the populace. In 1,000 A.D. this situation reached a crescendo, when the promised messiah and Golden Age of revelation never occurred. Due to Revelations' reference to the thousand-year-long imprisonment of the Dragon and because of the Apostle Peter's interpretation of one day being a thousand years to the Lord, a fervor of panic arose as the calendar approached 1,000 a.d., and much of Europe became obsessed with an apocalyptic mania.

> A Strange idea had taken possession of the popular mind at the close of the tenth and commencement of the eleventh century. It was universally believed that the end of the world was at hand; that the thousand years of the Apocalypse were near completion, and that Jesus Christ would descend upon Jerusalem to judge mankind. All Christendom was in commotion. A panic terror seized upon the weak, the credulous, the guilty, who in those days formed more than nineteen-twen-eths of the population. Forsaking their homes, kindred, and occupation, they crowded to Jerusalem to await the coming of the Lord, lightened, as they imagined, of a load of sin by their weary pilgrimage. To increase the panic, the stars were observed to fall from heaven, earthquakes to shake the land, and violent hurricanes to blow down the forests. All these, and more especially the meteoric phenomena, were looked upon as forerunners of the approaching judgments. Not a meteor shot athwart the horizon that did not fill a district with alarm, and send away to Jerusalem a score of pilgrims, with staff in hand and wallet on their back, praying as they went for the remission of their sins. Men, women, and even children, trudged in roves to the holy city, in expectation of the day when the heavens would open, and the son of God descend in his glory"(Mackay, 1841).

Crazed medieval Christians abandoned homes, farms and towns, trampling through the countryside blasting the trumpet of the Last Days. Although in some areas both commerce and agriculture came to a complete standstill, not much else took place on an apocalyptic scale. But, human society itself suffered due to famine and other problems from the temporary anarchy and chaos caused by the doomsday belief, and the lack of proper crop rotations that resulted from it. This lack of fulfillment of prophecy led to a quest for spiritual reinvigoration. Interest in the Holy Land from which the Bible originated began to brew. This eventually resulted in the period known as the Crusades, when European nations decided it was time to reconnect with the Holy Land depicted in the Bible. Through this religious military campaign, Europe was reintroduced to the science and knowledge of the Ancient World. The Holy Land, which was mostly under Islamic dominion, had not fallen victim to the fire and brimstone ban on knowledge placed by the Catholic Church, thus many of the ancient texts of science and philosophy survived in Islamic libraries.

One of the great myths from the period of the Crusades is the story of the Grail. And it was widely believed that this mythical golden chalice was Europe's best chance for redemption and spiritual reinvigoration. In the Grail mythology, via a magical symbiosis, for better or worse, the health of the king was in conjunction with the health of the kingdom. The most famous legends of the Grail tell the story of the ailing and despairing Fisher King, who can only be healed by a miraculous cup, that will restore the monarch's health, as well as fertility to the wasteland he ruled over. The whole wasteland motif is thought to have been of Arab origins, and the early crusaders brought it back to Europe believing that if the Grail were not recovered then the wasteland that befell the Saudi-Arabian desert would befall their more fertile land.

Soma, Haoma and the Grail

Clearly the Grail has taken on many forms, but as a symbol it had to start somewhere, and it is in looking at the origins of this myth, where we can see some interesting connections with the lost history of both cannabis and the myths of Soma and Haoma. In the well-researched Jungian study *The Grail Legend*, by Emma Jung and Marie- Louise von Franz, the authors offered an overview of the different theories of the Grail legend's origins. "That the Legend originates, at least in part, in the East is indisputable and may be discerned from the texts themselves..." (Jung & von Franz, 1960/1970).

> L.J. Ringbom in Graltempel und Paradises [(1951)] ... attempts to establish the core of the legend as stemming from a Persian tradition ... Ringbom ... tried ... to show that the idea of the Grail Castle ... came to Europe from Persia and that this castle or temple – a mandala shaped structure – represents Paradise, or spiritual Beyond, whose prototype he sees in the Parsee [Zoroastrian] sanctuary of the holy fire at Siz.... Ringbom also compares its structure with the mountain sanctuary of the Moslem sect of the Assassins, a secret brotherhood under the authority of an "Old Man of the Mountain," with which the Templars cultivated particularly close relations.
>
> ...F. Von Suhtshek [(1926; 1930; 1931; 1936)] ... also tries to trace Wolfram's Parzival back to an Iranian national epic, Barzu-Name, and equates Monsalvatsch, for instance with sal-wadsche, a famous Parsee holy place (Jung & von Franz, 1960/1970).

That there may be some connection between the Persian traditions associated with Haoma and the Grail mythology, has long been a subject of speculation. Notable references to this can be found in Sir Jehangir Coyajee,'s *Iranian & Indian Analogues of the Legend of the Holy Grail*, (1939) as well as Ananda K. Coomaraswamy's "Sir Gawain and the Green Knight: Indra and Namuci," (1944). As the occultist and Freemason Rene Guénon (1886-1951) wrote in regards to the lost identity of the original Grail:

> ...what was lost is represented not only by the sacred cup, that is, by the Grail or various of its equivalents, but also by what it contains. This is readily enough understood, for the content, however designated, is actually nothing other than the "draught of immortality," the possession of which essentially constitutes one of the privileges of the primordial state. Thus it is said that after the Vedic Soma became unknown in a certain epoch, it was necessary to substitute another draught that only represented it; and although not positively indicated anywhere, it even seems that this substitute was later lost in turn.... And while on this subject it bears recalling that in

> other traditions wine also substitutes for the 'draught of immortality,' moreover, this is why it is generally taken as a symbol of the hidden or guarded doctrine, namely, esoteric and initiatic knowledge ... (Guénon, 1964/2004).

Elsewhere in reference to the Grail Quest, Guénon here with, S.D. Fohr rightly commented that:

> All traditions allude to something that from a certain time become lost or hidden, such as the Soma of the Hindus and the Persian Haoma or "draught of immortality," these latter having a very direct connection with the Grail, which was said to be the sacred chalice which contained the blood of Christ –another "draught of immortality."
>
> ....Returning to the Grail itself, we can easily see that its primary significance is basically the same as that of the sacred vase, wherever it is found, and which notably in the East, is that of the sacrificial vessel that originally held the Vedic Soma or Mazdean Haoma, the "draught of immortality" that bestows upon or restores to those who take it with the requisite disposition, the "sense of eternity" (Guénon & Fohr, 1927).

Leopold von Schroeder (1851-1920), the German Indoligist known for his scientific studies of myth and legends, paid particular attention to the connections to the Vedic Soma and its counterpart the Avestan Haoma with the Holy Grail, noting a variety of crossovers between the Arthurian and Vedic mythologies in this regard. "L. von Schroeder, *Die Wurzeln des Sage vom heilgen Graal*, [(1910)]... locates the first home of the grail in India and cites parallels and examples from the Vedas where the sun and moon are spoken of as miraculous vessels on the inaccessible mountains of Heaven. There they may be approached only by gods, demi-gods and the blessed dead, and von Schroeder compares the Grail to these wonder vessels" (Jung & von Franz, 1960/1970).

> A most important point of concordance, that illuminates a feature of the grail poetry that remained quite obscure up to now was the acquisition of the heavenly Soma by Indra signifies at the same time the production of rain, liberation of the water streams for the earth and human world, that the Soma sacrifice therefore represents a rain magic and that the Soma-Moon is a dispenser of rain – and that those Grail sagas agree with it in a remarkable way, that describe the land around the Grail castle as withered, deserted and infertile, until the discovery of the Grail castle by the Grail hero, or the magic question through which he becomes lord of the Grail, changes everything at one stroke, makes the meadows and woods turn

> green and the waters flow again (von Schroeder, 2014).

J.F. Hewitt, in *The Ruling Races of Prehistoric Times in India, Southwestern Asia, and Southern Europe*, also commented on the symbolic connections between the mythologies of the Eastern Soma/Haoma and the European Grail stories.

> In both the Indian Soma myth and that of the Holy Grail, the blood of the god of life was borne through the air, the home of the life-giving moisture in the heavenly casket, the rain-cloud, the vessel of the Grail, whence it descended on the earth after being, in the original myth, released from bondage by the lightning flash of the thunder-god, the spear which impregnated it with vital and healing heat. It was the distilled essence of this sap of life, re-born in the heavenly vessel, the mother-tree, which was given as the drink of healing and immortality to the worshipers of the Hindu Soma... (Hewitt, 1895).

As David Frawley also notes in his Gods, Sages and Kings: Vedic Secrets of Ancient Civilization, "the medieval search for the Holy Grail reflects the search for the ancient Soma chalice, the vessel in which the immortal Soma was held and from which it could be drunk" (Frawley, 1993). The ancient book, The Sacred Laws of the Aryas records that "The sacrificial cup is declared to be pure on account of its contact with the Soma juice" (translation, 1882). This view was well shared among the more occult minded and we read in Volume 98 of The Theosophist: "The chalice of the Grail has been identified with the vase containing the Vedic Soma and with that filled by the Mazdaan Haoma" (The Theosophist, 1976). This connection to the religious myths of India is of particular interest when you consider that in early accounts of the Grail mythology, the sacred vessel is found in India. As Mircea Eliade has noted, "in the cycle of compositions posterior to Wolfram von Eschenbach, [(1170-1220)] the Grail is won in India by Lohengrin, Parzival's son, accompanied by all the knights" (Eliade, 1985). Eschenbach's prequel, to his more famous *Parzival*, *Titurel* (ca. 1270) includes a Grail Knight from India.

Others have suggested that the San-grail is analogous to the Sanskrit Soma-graha, the vessel used for the ritual drinking of Soma. In Vedic ritual, Soma was taken from "jars with small cups" known by the name "Graha," which is similar sounding to Grail. "At the Soma offering there are always two Grahas required" (Haug, 1863). "...graha, the Soma cup (or 'grail')" (Wilson, 1999). "In Vedic literature ... the word graha refers to a 'sacrificial vessel,' or, rather, a particular pot used to collect Soma, the sacred drink that, in Indian mythology, granted immortality.... The similarity between graha and grail in both sound and concept is marked" (Vinci, 2005). These sacred Soma cups have their counterparts in the related Avestan tradition of Haoma, and were carried on into later Zoroastrian times, when vision-questers like Ardu Viraf, drank potent cannabis infusions on behalf of the community.

> Ancient texts such as the Avesta provide evidence hemp was used in the Iranian world ... to produce ecstatic states of mind. Zarathustra himself used this technique to nourish his mystique. In this he was imitating his protector, King Vishtasp, who received from the gods the cup with narcotic ingredients, "Haoma and hemp." Thanks to this "illuminating beverage" the possessed could "open the eye of the soul to obtain knowledge" – in other words, he experienced hallucinations and an intoxication that was certainly real, though considered as magico-religious. The king thought he was in this way escaping his body and sending his soul to travel in paradise. But the descriptions of the place or state of mind in question as being full of "illumination" are typical of the visions experienced by the consumer of hashish, along with a sleep like trance which obliges him to lie down (Charriere, 1979).

The "eye of the soul" is identical to the association of Soma with the "Single Eye" (RV.1.87.5; 9.9.4; 9.10.8; 9.10.9; 9.97.46) and makes reference to the psychological state caused by the sacred beverage. Just as the God Soma entered the beverage Soma, so too did Soma enter the devoted imbiber, enabling devotee and God to see with a "Single Eye." The Mazdean tradition of the "eye of the mind" carried over into later Zoroastrian times, in references to the "eye of the soul."

It seems obvious from the above references that for at least a century respected and serious researchers have been tying in the Grail mythology with that of the Haoma in Persia and Soma in India, and moreover such influences are clearly apparent in the earliest accounts of the myth. With the Grail's powers of restoring vitality, bestowing immortality, and even making foods taste better, along with its mountain home of Montsalvat, it easy to see a connection with the legends of the mountain-born Soma/Haoma and the Graha from which it was consumed.

The Scythian Grail

The influence of Scythian culture, in Europe and upon the Celts, may also have played a role. As noted earlier, the Scythians burned cannabis as well as consumed it as Haoma. As well, we know the Scythians dominated in Northern India from about 400 B.C.-200 A.D. Prof. Scott Littleton, and Linda Malcor's book, *From Scythia to Camelot*, (1994/2000) notes a strong 2nd-century A.D. Scythian influence on the Arthurian Legends. Littleton and Malcor convincingly demonstrate that central Asian myths of swords, horseback riding knights and magical chalices likely accompanied Scythian groups such as the Alans and Sarmatians who worked as Roman mercenaries and settled in Western Europe in the first few centuries A.D.

> The weight of the evidence ... does not support the conclusion, so widely held among ... scholars, that the medieval legends in question are rooted in Western Europe. Rather any Celtic elements in the tale appear to be later additions to and overlays on material with a very different origin. The evidence clearly suggests that, save for some unique historical events, the core of what later became the Arthurian and Grail literature was born on the steppes of ancient Scythia among a remarkable people whose impact on both the history and folklore of the West is only just beginning to be appreciated (Littleton & Malcor, 1994: 2000).

Amongst the stories known as the "Nart Sagas," or "Knight Sagas," of the Scythians can be found parallels of many Arthurian legends, such as the "Sword in the Stone," which may be based on the Alan practice of impaling a sword into the burial mound of deceased kings. Particularly interesting are references to the "cup of the Narts" which, like the Grail, was said to hold magical properties, such as elevating itself to the lips of a hero "without flaw" (Littleton & Malcor, 1994: 2000). One can only speculate that the longing of these displaced Scythians, cut off from the quality cannabis which once made the intoxicating beverage that filled the fiery cups in their homeland, led to the mythology of the long-lost Grail and the quest for its rediscovery.

I had the opportunity to correspond and talk to Prof. Littleton at great length before his untimely and unexpected demise in 2010, as he was of great assistance when I was writing *Cannabis and the Soma Solution*, particularly in figuring out all the intricacies of Indo-European cultures and particularly the various Indo-European groups that have been clanned together under the collective title of the "Scythians." When I first approached Littleton he was quite sure that I was wrong about the origins and identity of the Soma cult; however, upon reading the manuscript, his mind was changed, and he wrote the following in his comments for the back cover of the book when it was published not long before his death. "I have read Mr. Bennett's several books on this subject [cannabis history] and am in general agreement with what he states, especially about the extent to which the Vedic hallucinogen Soma was probably made from cannabis. Indeed, his research has changed my own thinking about this ancient conundrum (heretofore, the majority of scholars have suggested that Soma was prepared from psychotropic mushrooms)" (Littleton, 2010). We also discussed his theory about the sacred cups of the Scythians and the Grail, and my view that the whole thing was as much about what those cups contained, as the cups themselves.

Littleton and Malcor felt the Scythian mythology came to be connected with the Grail mythology, and particularly the stories of Arthur and the knights of the Round Table, through a branch of the Scythian tribes known as Sarmatians. They noted a Sarmatian commander bearing the Latinized name of "Arthur," "Artorius" was actually stationed in England, along with other connections in mythology and history. Littleton also wrote at length on this connection in a co-authored paper with Ann C. Thomas, "The Sarmatian Connection: New Light on the Origin of the Arthurian and Holy Grail Legends" (1978). Other researchers have noted this connection as well, such as the authors of *The New Arthurian Encyclopedia*, who noted that:

> Sarmatian warriors were heavy-armoured cavalry. They fought under dragon standards as their battle ensigns, worshiped as their tribal war-god a naked sword set upright in the ground or on a platform, had shamans as their tribal spiritual leaders, and used sacred cauldrons for burning hemp leaves to induce religious visions by inhaling the fumes. Their princes were buried in river banks; the next flooding would obliterate all traces of the graves as a precaution against grave-robbing. The parallels to Arthur's "knights," the Pendragon standard, the Sword in the Stone, the magician Merlin, the Grail vessel, and Arthur's unknown grave are obvious, though of course the Sarmatian hashish cauldron would be only one of several sources for the Grail (Lacy, et. al. 2013).

The authors of *The New Arthurian Encyclopedia* make a connection with the braziers of the Scythians, seeming to be unaware that archaeological evidence of the Scyths use of cannabis in infused beverages exist, and that they also utilized cups in the shape of braziers, indicating a connections between the two, and this connection was likely due to the contents used in both. The Scythian use of cannabis infused beverages may offer an explanation to the inclusion of ritual cups and vessels shaped like braziers in Scythian tombs as described by V.A. Kisel in "Herodotus's

Scythian Logos and Ritual Vessels of the Early Nomads," and this research also further corroborates the connections with the Arthurian legends of the Holy Grail.

> Some censers are small. Therefore, rather than being receptacles for heated stones, they served a different purpose. Possibly they were used for burning crushed dry plants or for ritual drinks. This is quite likely since the function of vessels changed with time or similar specimens may have been functionally different (Kisel, 2007).

Kisel points to a Scythian legend recorded by Herodotus of a fiery golden cup which fell from the sky and that would burst into flames when approached unless the recipient was the future king, who in the myth is the progenitor of Scythian culture and the direct ancestor of Scythian royalty. All this is very reminiscent of the Grail Legend, and the following Scythian myth, recorded by Herodotus, is very comparable to that of the Arthurian myth of the "sword in the stone." The Legend has it that a son of Zeus, a certain Targaitaus, wedded a daughter of the river Borsythenes. This marriage produced three sons, the youngest of which was Colaxias. The mythology describes how during their reign there fell from the sky a golden plough, a golden battle axe, and most importantly in Kisel's view, a golden cup. The two older brothers tried to pick up these miraculous gifts but as each of them tried the gold burst into flames. But when the younger brother tried to pick up the prizes, the fire went out and he was able to carry the golden implements home victorious. The elder brothers recognized this as a sign from heaven and gave over the whole kingdom to Colaxais. Mythologically, this identified the origins of the Scythian caste system; Colaxais was the ancestor of the "Royal Scythians," one brother the forefather of the "Warrior Scythians" and the other the "Agricultural Scythians."

In a related myth, Hercules, after losing his horses, is traveling on foot, during these travels he is seduced by a serpent woman, whom he agrees to sleep with in exchange for his stolen horses. After returning the horses the snake woman thanked Hercules for the three sons that their encounter had produced and asked the ancient hero how she should decide which of the children should be permitted to live in the homeland of his mother. Hercules told her that she shall know the one who is to remain by his being able to draw Hercules' bow and put on his girdle, which had a golden goblet attached. The youngest son, Scythes, accomplished this, and it was this Scythes, son of Heracles, who became father of the line of Scythian kings. Having related the legend, Herodotus adds: "And from the circumstance of the goblet which hung from the belt, the Scythians to this day wear goblets on their girdles." A warrior had to kill some enemies and show personal heroism to be awarded with such a cup, and only the most respected men were allowed to wear one with gold appliqué. These goblets were in some periods also made from a human skull recovered from the body of a dead enemy, reminiscent of the skull cups, the "kapala," used by Shiva and his devotee Saddhus to drink bhang from. Interestingly, Scythians settling in Northern India (300 b.c.-300 a.d.) adopted the worship of Shiva.

Kisel states that in looking "for analogues to the legendary cup, one should pay special attention to vessels with segment shaped handles. These vessels raise many questions that are yet unresolved" (Kisel, 2007). Kisel felt that the segmented handles, and shapes of these vessels, were inspired by the braziers used for burning cannabis, and that their imitative shape indicated a fiery beverage that was related to what was being burnt in the braziers. "These silver gilt vessels decorated with relief representations occupied a central place in Scythian funerary assemblages" (Kisel, 2007).

> All these facts suggest that vessels with segment-shaped handles were the key element of the Scythian cult and were used in the most sacred rites that were tabooed for the profane. Unlike censers, they may have been only symbolically related to fire and were used as receptacles for sacral "fiery" liquids, such as those used in many traditions. It appears possible that the Scythians indeed associated such vessels with the legendary cup that had fallen from the sky.
>
> ...In a separate publication, I have attempted to demonstrate that the "fiery" drink was indeed drunk by the Scythians (Kisel, 2002). Also, broken-off handles on clay vessels made in the Scythian animal style and found at Ziviyeh, Iran, indicate that such cups were already used at the early stages of Scythian history. The similarity between censers, cauldrons, dippers, and bowls with segment-shaped handles is not restricted to their globular shape. They were evidently united by the same idea: connection with fire. Their common "divine prototype" – the heavenly bowl – was endowed with a magical ability to catch fire, and the same capacity was probably attributed to all these vessels.... The image of a blazing cup was apparently related to Indian mythology and Zoroastrism; Zoroastrian texts mention ritual vessels with fire burning inside them (Kisel, 2007).

In relation, the late archaeologist Andrew Sherratt has suggested "The ritual plant products traditionally consumed on the steppes in braziers [circa 3,500 B.C., or earlier] would now have been prepared as a euphoriant or inebriant drink – including the substance later known as Haoma" (Sherratt, 1995). And thus, another factor in the conception of the Scythian "fiery cups" may have involved the mythology of Haoma/Soma. As the Celestial Soma, was produced by the Sun, acted out by Agni in the Vedic tradition and the Goddesss Tabiti in the Scythian, and poured out into the Celestial bowl, the moon. As such the earthly Soma represented the life-giving fire of the sun in liquid form.

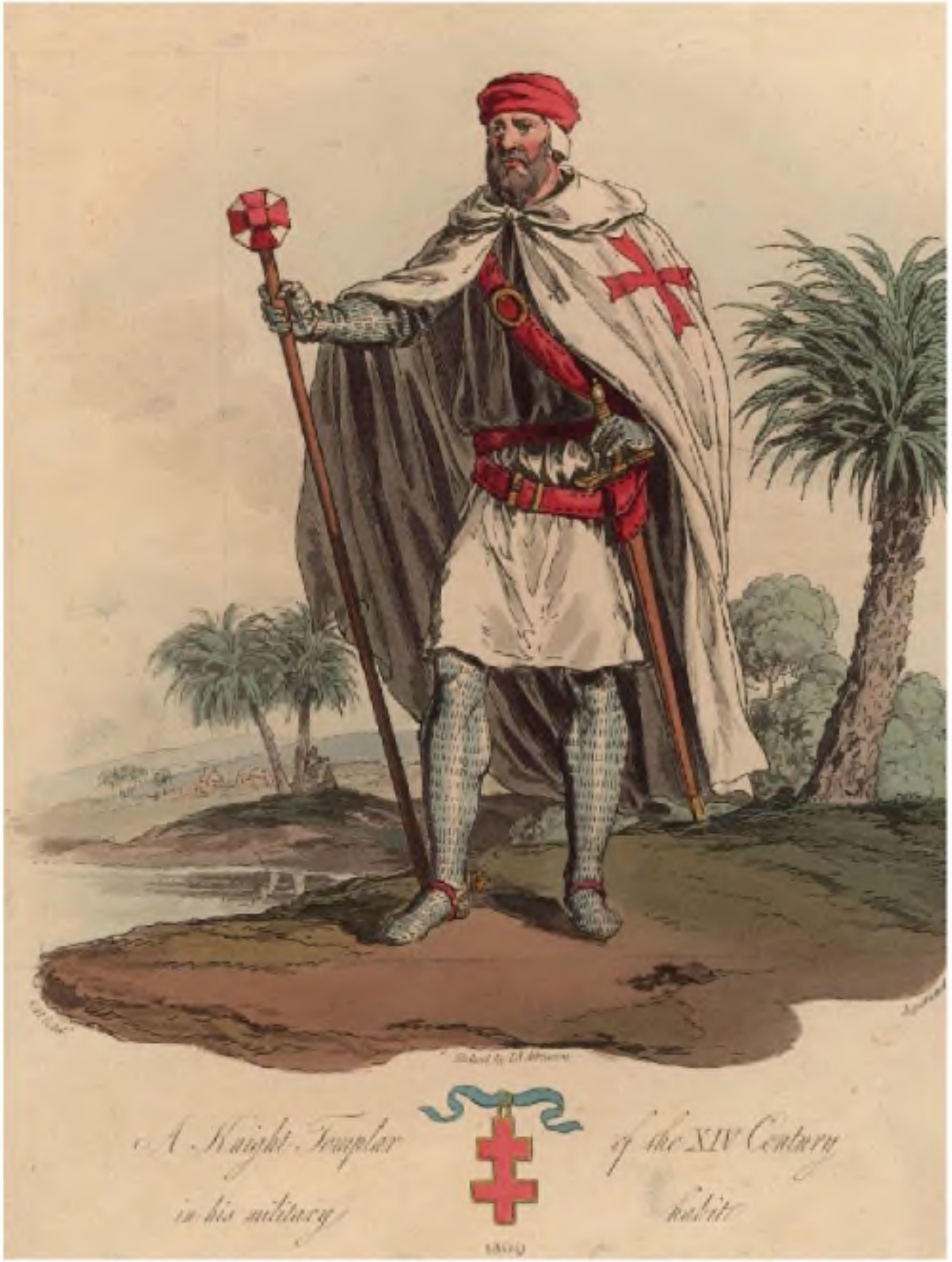
Kisel concluded that despite having a common mythological heritage, the ritual life of European and Asian Scythians held some differences, notably involving their purification rites and objects of adoration. "European Scythians did not practice the vapour bath described in the Scythian logos, and their principal sacral vessel was a round bowl or a dipper, which often had segment-shaped handles. Asian nomads commonly practiced purification with hemp-vapor, and their most sacral vessels were a cauldron, a dipper, and a censer, most of which are vessels used by large groups of people, possibly clan members..." (Kisel, 2007). Making his connections all the clearer, Kisel also noted it was likely "that saucers, like most nomadic stone altars, served as press stones for expressing Soma-Haoma, because in this case, too, both plants and fire could have been used" (Kisel, 2007).

More recently, the subject of Scythian gold cups and cannabis beverages has re-emerged again after an exciting archaeological find, and the analysis of ancient residues. A collection of gold cups and bowls found at a Scythian burial site in Southern Russia were tested for the residues which had solidified in them, and revealed they had been used for drinking a preparation of cannabis and opium (Curry, 2015). These contents fit with the findings of cannabis and opium residues of Sarianidi at BMAC, although it is unclear if they tested for other plants, such as ephedra that was found at BMAC, in regards to the gold cups. This find was widely reported as the discovery of "golden bongs" used for "smoking" cannabis in the mainstream press, a bong being a cannabis smoking device, that was not invented till centuries if not millennia after the time of the Scythians. But as archaeologist Professor Anton Gass, who was involved with the analysis of the gold cups and bowls has noted "the difficulty was due to the translation. It is not a bong, but ritual vessels for Haoma." (Gass, 2015).

Scythian golden cups, used for drinking a cannabis and opium preparation, identified as Haoma.

In relation to this, it is worth noting that this scenario does not negate a Celtic connection to the Grail mythology completely, as cultural ties and exchanges between the Scyths and Celts have long been noted. Further, as referred to earlier, cannabis has been found at a number of Celtic sites, and there is archaeological evidence that in ancient Europe – the plant was used as a ritual incense and likely a beverage. In relation to this study, it is interesting to note that in *Ploughing the Clouds*, Peter Lamborn Wilson/Bey has suggested a Celtic Soma, but in this case he has been taken in by the work of R. Gordon Wasson, and unconvincingly tries to identify the use of the Amanita Muscaria in Western Europe. As well there are the suggestions of the respected late archeologist Andrew Sherratt that the "corded ware culture" (2900 B.C.-2350 B.C.) that was wide spread throughout Europe, consumed cannabis beverages in the pottery containers they are named after (Sherratt, 1995).

Other possible avenues of a cannabis origin of the Grail myth can also be found. It should also be noted that the Grail myth has been intertwined with the history of the Knights Templar, a group of Crusader-era Knights, that a number of researchers have seen as a conduit for the penetration of the occult use of hashish into Europe. "The extent to which the historical connections with the Templars, with Persia, with Islam and with Celtic-Germanic heathendom and pagan antiquity play a part has already been noted by many" (Jung and von Franz, 1960: 1970).


A Knight Templar of the XIV Century
in his military habit
1809

CHAPTER 5

The Knights Templar and the Grail

The Templars have been associated with the Grail mythology since its early stages, "the thirteenth-century French romance *Perlesvaus*, may have actually been written by a Templar, such as its attention to detail in regards to military matters and the fact that it features knights who were the Templar mantle of the red cross on the white background" (Martin, 2011). And this alleged connection has led to sensational speculation.

> The Templars appear in The Perlesvaus not just as military men, but also as high mystical initiates. This is indicative, for the Templars were only too eager to reinforce the popular image of themselves as magi, as wizards or sorcerers, as necromancers, as alchemist, as sages privy to lofty arcane secrets. And indeed, it was precisely this image that rebounded upon them and provided their enemies with the means of their destruction (Baigent & Leigh, 1989).

As well, in *Parzival*, by Wolfram von Eschenbach (c. 1160/80-c. 1220) a German knight and poet, the hero of the tale, Parsival, is identified as a member of a group regarded as the Templars, the "Templeisen." Von Eschenbach is also said to have paid a special visit to Outremer, a Templar outpost, so that he could witness the Order in action. Wolfram was said to have first heard of the tale from a source in 13th century Toledo, during the reign of Alphonso the 10th, also known as Alphonoso the Wise. Alphonso, himself a poet, was "a great patron of the Troubadours, and himself belonged to that singing fraternity" (Evans, 1889). The Troubadours were instrumental in the spread of the Grail mythology.

Alphonso also had a deep interest in occult matters, and one of his books of poetry detailed the benefits of finding the Philosopher's Stone,[1] an alchemical symbol that is often associated with the Grail. He dabbled in chemistry, and astrology, and had many important works translated during his reign, such as the first translations of the drug-filled Arabic book of magic, *The Picatrix* and other occult texts. During this period, hashish "was... openly consumed in Southern Spain until that country's reconquest by Isabella [(1451-1504)] the Catholic and the reestablishment of the firm grip of the Roman Catholic Church" (Nahas, 1985). There are also somewhat controversial claims of evidence of smoked cannabis from 10th to 13th-century Spain.[2]

> While historians now recognize medieval Toledo as an extraordinary enlightened centre of multicultural scholarship, for centuries afterwards it had a disreputable reputation as the hub of necromancy. The French priest and writer Helinand of Froidmont, who died in the 1220s or 1230s, observed for instance that clergymen seeking instruction found the liberal arts in Paris, the law in Bologna, and demons in Toledo. The city's reputation for black magic was spread across northern Europe not only through such clerical condemnation but also through the popularity of French and German romance literature in which Toledo and its magicians were represented as a potent source of supernatural power in tales of chivalric adventure (Davies, 2010).

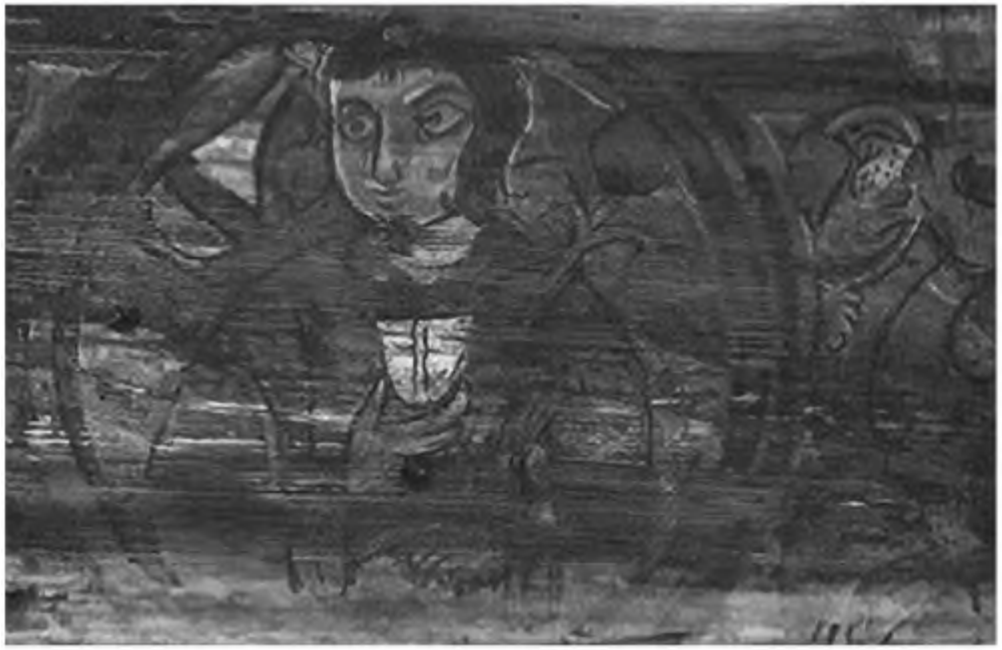
Spain, at the time, was rife with Islamic influences. In Esenbach's account, Parzival first encounters the object of his quest through a Queen dressed in the "costly silks of Araby" who "bore the pride of Paradise, Root and branch, beyond all price. That was a thing men call the Grail." This has also been translated as "root and blossom of Paradise garden, that which men call 'The Grail'." These descriptions clearly hint at a vegetative source, and an Arabic influence in the origins of the Grail. They also bring to mind Islamic verses of hashish from this same period. "It is something belonging to meadows whose greenness resembles the gardens (of Paradise)" (Al-Is ìrdi, 13th century).

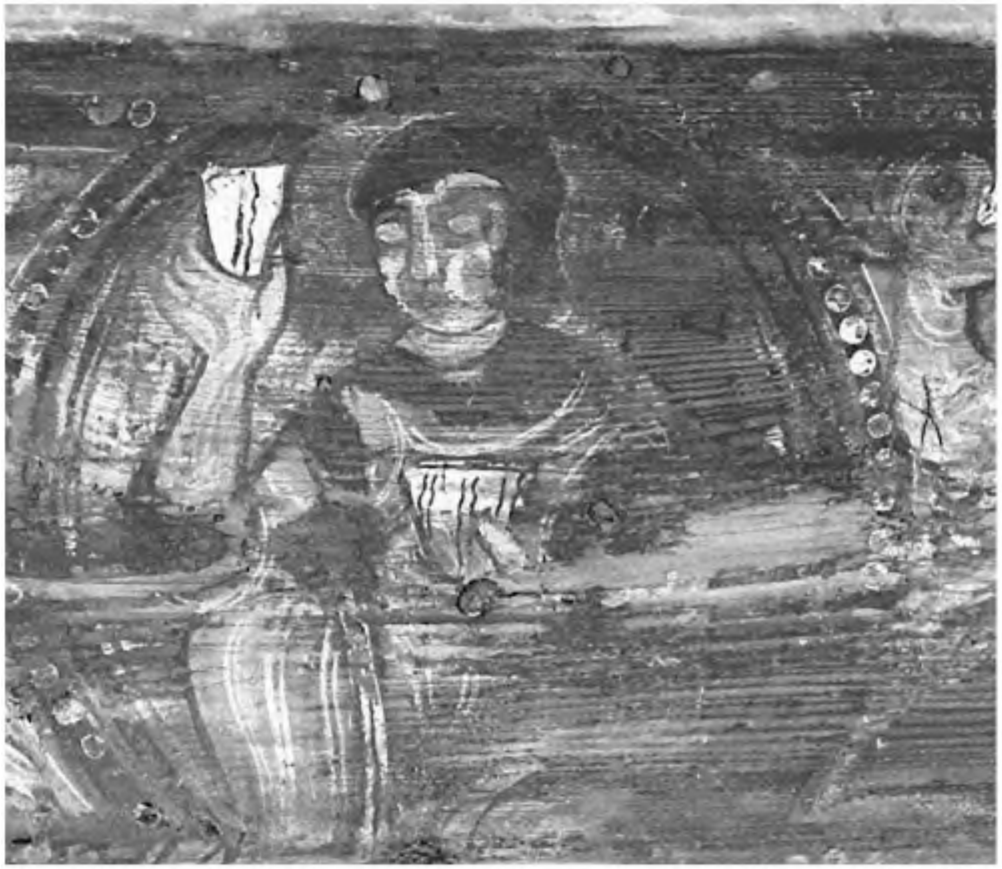
> Its "green dress" and general decorativeness as a plant bespeak the wholesomeness of hashish, as indicated in the verse of ... Ali b. Makki ... in early thirteenth century Baghdad:
>
> > Now drive sadness away from me as well as harm
> > With the help of a virgin(al being), wedded in its
> > green dress.

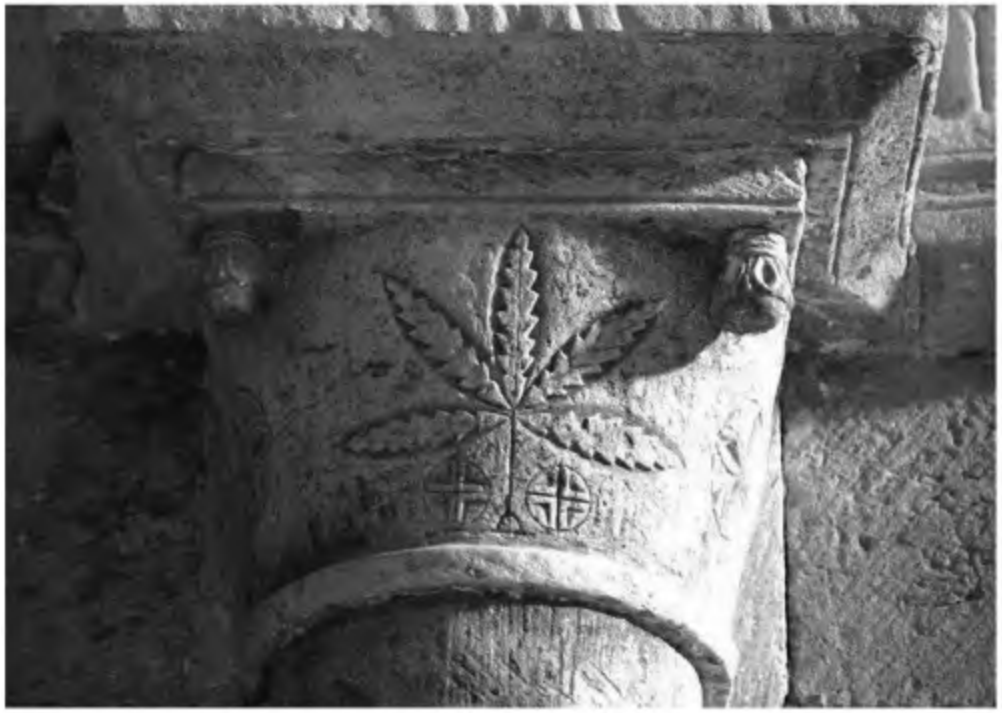
> It reveals itself to us adorned with brocade.
> No metaphor or verse of prose is strong enough for it.
> It appears, filling the eyes wit light through its beauty,
> A beauty that puts to shame the light of meadows and flowers with a bright sheen.
> It is a bride whose hidden secret gladdens the soul....

> The green color, and possibly also the fact that hashish was cultivated in "gardens" ... permitted its association with gardens, and the word "garden" naturally evoked the idea of the garden, Paradise (Rosenthal, 1971).

An interesting avenue of investigation into the Grail regarding Spain, might be found in the book *Medieval Islamic Symbolism and the Paintings of the Cefalu Cathedral*, by Mirjam Gelfer-Jorgensen, where paintings of devotees holding sacred cups predominantly appear and are compared to the vessels the ZoroastrianS used for Haoma or wine mixtures from the Sassanian period, which as we have shown were known to contain cannabis, were used. "Haoma, wine or water would be the beverage we would assume to be in the goblets" (Gelfer-Jorgensen, 1986).







Detail from a medieval stone column in Fuente el Carnero, Spain. The first documented mention of the town dates from 1223, when king Alfonso IX of Leon referred to it in two documents.

Also, in Wolfram von Esenbach's version of the tale, the Templars are the knights who guard the Grail and the Grail castle. As George Andrews notes in his classic *Drugs and Magic:*

> Wolfram von Eschenbach composed "Parsival" between A.D. 1198-1215. During that period the Knights Templar (who are very strongly associated with the Grail legend) were in full flower.... One reason why the Pope suddenly turned against them and had them exterminated almost overnight may have been that they were suspected of maintaining relations with the aristocratic military mystical secret societies that were their equivalent within the structure of Islam. It seems possible that the paradise plant, hashish, could have been one of the elements in their secret ritual of communion (Andrews, 1997).

It has long been suggested that there was considerable "cultural exchanges" between these Hashishins and the controversial heroes/anti-heroes of the Crusade era, the Knights Templar. Such a connection could explain many of the so-called crimes of heresy that the Templars were accused of. We also know that the Hashishins, were accused by their enemies of heresy as well as "drug taking ... licentious sexual orgies ... [and] witchcraft" (Wasserman, 2001). As we have also seen in Chapter 3 the Hashishin, like the Nosairiyeh, with whom they shared a common heritage, were also suspected by "Muslims ... and Crusaders alike ... that they practiced the pagan and Gnostic sexual rites of antiquity" (Deveney, 1997). As well as the preservation from ancient times of the "sacred libation (the Haoma)" (Conder, 1886).

The history of the Templars is clouded in controversy, and the bad luck associated with Friday the 13th is thought to have originated with the October, Friday the 13th, 1307 Mass arrests of the Templars. On this date, simultaneous raids of Templar properties took place, and the arrests of all Templars found. As well, all possessions were immediately seized, and strict inventories were kept of all items taken, and as we shall see this included records of the seizure of a certain herb. At their peak, the Templars counted 15,000 members, an impressive number for the early medieval period; they had numerous properties throughout Europe and the Mid-East, and they had acquired legendary wealth, which they controlled like bankers. The court records and the legitimacy of the arrest of this mysterious order of medieval knights, is still hotly debated and through this controversy, they have become legends of the occult world.

Among the various occult theories are that European knights were initiated by the Assassins and privy to their occult secrets. As Lady Queensborough, sensationally noted:

> Having embraced Gnosticism while in Palestine, and in touch with the sect of the Assassins, the Templar order degenerated, and some of its members, under the influence of that sect, were said to practice Phallicism, or sex-worship and satanism and to venerate "The Baphomet," the ideal of the Luciferians. The crime of Sodomy was a rite of Templar initiation (Queensborough, 1933).

Such rumors have persisted into the modern day, and it is still readily claimed as "a fact that several of the founders of the Knights Templars were initiates in the Sect of the Assassins" (Ndakwe, 2003). Historically we do know that going back to their own time, the Templars were accused of entertaining Moslems within the confines of their Temple, even allowing guests to perform plays and practice rituals there. As well, there have also been more believable claims of temporary allegiances between the Templars and Assassins, against common enemies in the Mid-East.

Jules Mitchelet noted, with less fanfare, in the History of France, the Templars "were notoriously in communication with the Assassins of Syria; and the similarities of their costume with that of the Old Man of the Mountain was noticed with fear. They had received the Soldan [Sultan] in their houses, allowed the Mahommedans the exercise of their worship, and given the infidels warning of the arrival of Frederick II" (Mitchelet, 1845). The Templars did in reality break new ground in diplomacy, and the "first treaty made between the Christians and the Muslims was with the leader of the Assassins" (Hodge, 2013)."The Templars,... succeeded in establishing an ascendancy over the Assassin castles, and collected tribute from them" (Lewis, 1967/2003). Lewis also notes a number of medieval cordial European contacts with the Assassins, and even an embassy of Muslim leaders "principally from the Old Man of the Mountain" into 13th century Europe, seeking allegiances with the French and British. "[S]ome

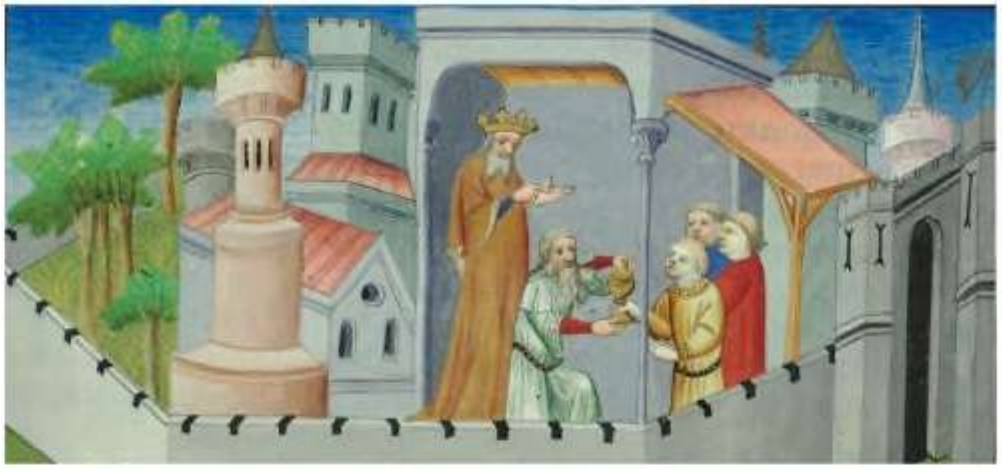
intercourse of a social nature had unquestionably taken place between the Templars and Assassins in the twenty-five years of more or less pacific relations while the one group offered, and the other received, the yearly bloodwite or tribute of two thousand pieces of gold (Legman, 1966).

Unfortunately, it is hard to separate fact from fiction in regard to influence from this contact, and much has been made of it. Although there seems to be a historical consensus that some contact did indeed take place, it clearly alternated between hostile and tolerable. As well, the Templars were in the Holy Land for such a length of time, that some knights came to be born there,[3] and these were likely well-versed in local beliefs of both religion and magic that was in practice in their place of birth and the only home they had known.

As Jung and von Franz have noted in *The Grail Legend*: "In spite of all the controversies associated with the subject, the possibility that the Templars were spiritually influenced by certain movements of Islam, especially esoteric Gnostic ones, cannot be dismissed out of hand" (Jung & von Franz, 1960/1970). This has been a widely held view for centuries. "There is good reason for believing the Knights Templar borrowed much of their constitution of their order from this terrible sect" (Hodgson, 1881). "[T]he

question of the Assassins is not easy to dismiss, as a very intense relations between the Templars and the Persian guerrilla sect of the 'Assacis' or Hashish-eaters did exist at a date during the Crusades very close to that of the assuming by the Templars of the red cross and the final form of their organizational hierarchy" (Legman, 1966). As Gershon Legman has also noted in *The Guilt of the Templars*: "According to Victor-Emile Mitchelet ... in *Le*

Secret de la Chevalerie(1930) the Knights, Squires, and Servants of the Templar order corresponded exactly to the Refik, Fedavi, and Lassik, of the Assassins, the priors of the Temple to the Dailskebirs and Dais; and the Grand Master of the Temple to Sheik-al-Djebal of the Assassins, none other than Hassan ibn-as-Sabbah, the redoubtable 'Old Man of the Mountain'" (Legman, 1966).



The Old Man of the Mountain drugging his disciples. From The Travels of Marco Polo.

In his classic *The History of the Assassins: Derived from Oriental Sources*, (1835),[4] Joseph Freiherr von Hammer-Purgstall, traced the Secret Societies of his own day, and their intent and structure, such as the Freemasons, back to the Templars and their association with the Assassins, stating that it was "probably through the medium of the Crusades, passed ... the spirit of the east into that of the West":

> ...The Assassins, thank heaven, has hithero been without parallel. The Templars, incontrovertibly, stand in the next rank to them; their secret maxims, particularly in so far as relates to the renunciation of positive religions, and the extensions of their power by the acquisition of castles and strong places, seem to have been the same as those of the order of the Assassins. The accordance, likewise, of the white dress and red fillets of the Assassins, with the white mantle and red cross of the Templars, is certainly remarkably striking.
>
> ...The Assassins were, themselves ... a branch of the Ismailites, the proper Illuminati of the east. The institution of their lodge at Cairo; the various grades of initiation; the appellation of master; companions, and novices; the public and the secret doctrine; the oath of unconditional obedience to unknown superiors, to serve the ends of the order; all agree completely with what we have seen and read in our own days, concerning secret revolutionary societies; and they coincide not less in the form of their constitution, than in the common object of declaring all kings and priests superfluous....
>
> [T]he Templars ... besides the grand-master and grand priors, and religious nuncios, had also some resemblance to the Assassins in their spirit of political interference and secret doctrine ... the Templars had also secret tenets, which denied and abjured the

> sanctity of the cross, as the others did the commandments of Islamism...(von Hammer Purgstall, 1813/1835).

In his *Mysterium Baphometis revelatum* von Hammer-Purgstall also claimed: "there remains no doubt that the most celebrated bowl of the Middle Ages, under the name of the Holy Grail, signifies nothing but a symbol of the Templar community and of Gnostic wisdom"(von Hammer-Purgstall, 1818).[5] Gnostic wisdom that he claims, came through contact with the Hashishin.

The authors of the controversial, *The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail* also commented on the liaison between the Templars and the Isma'ili offshoot the Hashishins: "Secret connections were also maintained with the Hashishim or Assassins, the famous sect of militant and often fanatical adepts who were Islam's equivalent of the Templars" (Baigent, et. al. 1982). They note that "the Templars' need to treat wounds and illness made them adepts in the use of drugs" and "in advance of their time regarded epilepsy not as demonic possession but as a controllable disease" (Baigent, et. al. 1982). Interestingly, cannabis is not only an effective battlefield medicine for poultices and as a mild anesthetic, it is also the safest natural or synthetic medication proven successful in the treatment of some forms of epilepsy. Certainly references to cannabis medicines started to appear in Europe around this same time, and these likely followed through the works of Avicenna (980-1037 A.D.) and other Islamic physicians who prescribed them being translated into Latin and making their way to Europe through returning Crusaders, like the Templars. It has even been suggested the drug was used as a medical form of PTSD medication, "Its introduction into Europe was due to the Crusaders, who needed the dreamy lethargy that the drug produces at the first in order to soothe them into forgetting the turmoil in which they found their homes" (Craig, 1918).

Among the various claims made about the connections between the Templars and Assassins, it has long been suggested that while on their sojourn to the Islamic controlled Holy Land, the European Knights Templar became associated with the use of hashish through a trade of goods and knowledge with the aforementioned Assassins and that the Templars brought back the occult use of the drug to Europe.

As the Reformed Church of the United States wrote of these Crusaders in a 19th-century tract: "it is said that they speedily acquired the language, literature, and even the vices of the Orient. 'They had sought the infidel, and the infidel converted them.' Lounging in the bath, they listened to the stories of the Arabian Nights; or, perhaps, under the influence of opium or hasheesh, beheld for themselves the wonders of Jinistan" (Reformed Church of the United States, 1884). Konrad Bercovici, relating the

Reefer Madness of his day, explained in *The Crusades* (1929), that:

> Upon their return to their homelands these knights continued their debaucheries. Their orgies and carouses were of a disgusting nature that even the French of those days had never heard of and could not condone. Sadism, masochism, voodoo rites, homosexuality, and every kind of perversion men were able to ferret out in their sick imaginations, were practiced by these returning cavaliers of the cross. These cavaliers had brought home the deadliest of narcotic weeds, hashish, Cannabis Indica, the use of which changes men into ferocious beasts. Under its influence the kindest individuals become monsters and murderers (Bercovici, 1929).

A similar path, without the ominous overtones, was also suggested by Robert Anton Wilson, in his classic *Sex and Drugs*:

> After contact with the Assassins... the Knights Templar developed some very peculiar doctrines. In 1307, the grand master of the order and 122 members were burned at the stake for heresy, blasphemy, sodomy and various other charges that seem to have been tacked on just to disgrace them utterly. The Templars had been trying to introduce sex into the Christian sacraments and ambiguous references to a sacred plant or herb appear in their surviving manuscripts (Wilson, 1973).

Unfortunately, Wilson gave no indications as to what references he was referring too and cited no sources. As well, in the mid-90s, in *Green Gold the Tree of Life: Marijuana in Magic and Religion* (1995), my then co-authors and I tried to make the case for this connection and in the throes of eager sensationalism, and in a sense, unknowingly laying the foundation for this later work, we wrote:

> The alchemical information about cannabis use was reintroduced into Europe after the Dark Ages, when the Knights Templar, founded by Hugh de Payns ("of the Pagans") around the beginning of the twelfth century, became involved in a trade of goods and knowledge with the hashish ingesting Isma'ilis [Assassins]. This knowledge was passed on from Eastern adepts and handed down esoterically through the medieval alchemists, Rosicrucians, and later on to the most influential occultists of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century (Bennett, et. al., 1995).

Umberto Eco incorporated this theme into his classic work of occult fiction, *Foucault's Pendulum*: "From the Assassins, the Templars learned occult rites. It was cowardice and ignorance that kept King Philip's inquisitors from seeing the spitting on the cross, the kiss on the anus, the black cat, and the worship of Baphomet were simply a repetition of other ceremonies performed under the influence of the first secret the Templars leaned in the Orient: The use of hashish" (Eco, 1988). The French website Templiers.org, which is dedicated to the history of the Templar, and offers a huge data base of historical information on the order, suggests that hashish played a role in the trial of the Templars:

> Hashish: the use of hashish was widespread in Iran (and neighbouring countries), more particularly related to spirituality, as it still is in most societies that make traditional use of it. Our Western concept of "drug" did not exist at the time and is not adapted to apprehend the use made by the Ismailis (nor the concept of alcohol in the Muslim countries that forbid it is not adapted to our culture and our use of wine).
>
> The Templars introduced hashish and culture in Europe in the return of the Crusades, and the origin of its criminalization in our country is the trial of the Templars by the Inquisition who likened its consumption as a "witchcraft crime." A century later these accusations were used against Joan of Arc by the same inquisition, to justify the existence of the voices she heard.[6]

Unfortunately, like a lot of claims made in this regard, no historical source is offered for this claim, and I know of no actual historical source indicating that references to hashish came up in the trial. However, as will be discussed later, we do know that cannabis was seized at Templar sites, during their mass arrests, and they had Arabs growing it for them prior to that.

Professor Georg Luck of John Hopkins University, took this association a step further, suggesting the Grail legends may have originated through this same cultural exchange, and that the myth's origins were also tied with hashish:

> The Alamut formula (for want of a better name) was a legendary brew containing hashish. It was prepared at [the mountain top fortress] Alamut ... established in the eleventh century by Hassan Ibn Sabbah, the leader of the Assassins, a fanatical sect that had declared war on Crusaders and other Muslims. "Assassin" originally meant "consumer of hashish" ... members of the sect drank or smoked hashish in order to become immortal ... the fortress was ransacked in 1256. It is said to have contained a large library, an alchemical laboratory and a collection of astronomical instruments. In other words: this was a research facility in the ancient Greco-Egyptian style that somehow survived, in an isolated spot, into the

> Middle Ages.
>
> The idea behind theriac (based on opium) and the Alamut formula (based on hashish) may give us a clue to the concept of the Holy Grail, which came into being during an era of transition between antiquity and the middle-ages. It was supposed to be a substance, or an object, sometimes associate with the body and blood of Christ, that vouchsafes happiness on earth and bliss in heaven to a chosen few. If you consider the linguistic connection between "holy" and "whole" and "healing" you can understand the Holy Grail both as a mystic (or magical) remedy and sacrament (Luck, 1985; 2006).

In one account of the Grail story, when Lancelot and another Knight seeking the Grail enter the castle where it is held, reminiscent of the Assassin initiates who were allegedly drugged unconscious, the heroes "quenched their thirst with wine, which overcame them immediately, as if it were nepenthe devised for that express purpose: and they fell into a deep sleep" (Waite, 1933). It has widely been suggested by numerous sources for centuries, that Nepenthe, famously used as an antidote for Grief in Homer's Odyssey, was a cannabis infused wine (Bennett, 2010). And as Marco Polo wrote "after quaffing ... intoxicating wine from glittering goblets, he sunk into the lethargy produced by debility and the opiate..." (Polo, 1300).[7]

Much has been made of both the Templars and their association with the Assassins, in modern works dealing with subjects such as the Grail and secret Societies. As we saw earlier, the Hashishins are believed to have used a concoction of hashish, and possibly opium, in initiation ceremonies, that were likely carried over from the earlier traditions of the Avesta and Zoroastrianism. More recently, Mark Amaru Pinkham has loosely and dramatically suggested of the Templars' use of cannabis in *Guardians of the Holy Grail*: "The Assassins ... identified the Holy Grail with not a cup or sacred object, but with the transformative power generated externally in their alchemical laboratories and through the intake of special herbs..." (Pinkham, 2004).

> [T]he Sufis, Assassins, and most probably the Knights Templar, smoked or consumed hashish, a compressed cannabis resin that was referred to in the Middle East as the "Flesh of Khadir." [Khidr] Through the sacramental consumption of Khadir's own flesh they were able to adequately expand their consciousness into the presence of the Green Man. Their experience of Khadir ... a tangible feeling of an all pervading consciousness or an eternal Witness who perpetually watches all third-dimensional existence from a transcendental realm...

Apparently a cult of hashish flourished in Europe

> after the Knights returned to France... (Pinkham, 2004).

We find similar claims in *Secret Societies: Gardiner's Forbidden Knowledge: Revelations about the Freemasons, Templars, Illuminati, Nazis, and the Serpent Cults*: "There is evidence to suggest that the Templars, in connections with the Assassins... understood the use of drugs... There is links to be found in the Templar rituals and beliefs with much of the Middle Eastern religions. There is even Sufi influence..." (Gardiner, 2007).

Modern occult writer and "Templar" Mark Amaru Pinkham suggests the Green Man image at right may have been used as a code for cannabis use. "One of the Assassins ... alchemical sacraments that may have intimately influenced the rites and ideology of the Knights Templar was a very strong concoction of hashish, a cannabis derivative.... This herb had, for ages, been known by certain sects of Moslems as the 'Flesh of Khadir,' which is one name for the ubiquitous Green man in his role as a legendary initiator of the Sufis. Among the Templars, Green Man Khadir was embraced and venerated..." (Pinkham, 2004).

One of the many images of the Green Man found at the alleged Templar site of Rosalyn Chapel.

Khidr is the Islamic representation and adaption of the Biblical Elijah. Under the name Elijah, this figure also plays an important part in the chariot mysticism of the Kabbalah and in alchemy. Likely due to his association with the rebirth of nature and the color green, Khidr came to be considered the patron Saint of cannabis, and his association with its use and effects is well known as was discussed in Chapter 3. "To the follower of the ... religion of Islam the holy spirit in bhang ... is the spirit of the great prophet Khizr, or Elijah" (Campbell, 1894). "...Al-Khadir had the secret of immortality, and could resurrect the dead as well. He was often depicted holding a golden goblet that contained the alchemical Elixir of Life, the drink of immortals..." (Rivera & Twyman, 2015).

Idries
Shah, refers to a medieval Turkish figure, known as Khidr Rumi, in honor of the Green One, who also had Grail-like associations. "Khidr Rumi's full name was Sayed Khidr Rumi Khapradri – the Cupbearer of Turkestan. It will be remembered that the Khidr order ... has as its slogan a salutation to the cupbearer. This cup had miraculous qualities" (Shah, 1964). Peter Lamborn Wilson makes the following comments on the Sufi term, Saki-Khaneh, House of the Cupbearer: "The saki or wine serving boy is a symbol of the Beloved or the spiritual master in Sufi poetry, but in Pakistan saki-khaneh is a slang term for a tea house that serves charas and bhang"(Wislon, 1988). This connection seems to go considerably far back in the Islamic wold, as we read in McCarthy's 1889 translation of *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*, the 12 century, Persian Polymath, Scholar, mathematician, astronomer, philosopher, poet, and most notably, the school chum of Hassan I-Sabbah, the original Old Man of the Mountain and founder of the Hashishin:

> Whenever on this green earth we are affected by joy, like unto the green steed of the sky, then with green youth I eat green hashish on the green sward until I lie below the green of the earth.
>
> O thou, the quintessence of the sum of existence, cease a moment to think upon evil gain, take one cup of wine from the eternal Saki, and set thyself free from the cares of both worlds.[8]

As noted in Chapter 3, Khayyam also referred to placing "hashish in my cup of wine," which itself is reminiscent of the Zoroastrian use of such combinations. John Bramhall suggested a century ago, in reference to Omar Khayyam that "Haoma ... might supply a source of the 'spiritual wine' of the Sufis, and of the hasheesh of his alleged friend, Hassan ben Sabbah, the chief of the Assassins, as well as offer an excuse, perhaps, for Omar's devotion to 'the cup'" (Bramhall, 1918). The relationship here is that the Islamic Omar Khayyam likely picked up the use of hashish from pre-Islamic Zoroastrian Persian influences. "Hemp ... as an intoxicant ... was passed on via Persians, to the Arabs" (Sherratt, 1997).

In this regard, it is interesting to see that Peter Lamborn Wilson has also noted a connection between Khidr and the Grail mythology, tying it in with Soma and Haoma as well:

> The Fountain of Youth in the legend of Khizr [sic, Khidr] and Alexander is guarded by an Angel. Khizr inadvertently "steals" the water and becomes immortal. In the Satapatha-Brahamana ... Soma is associated with a pool that restores youth. The text ... refers to "undecaying and immortal vital energy" that is drawn into the bowl as Soma. The Grail is guarded

by a maimed king, who is thus structurally related to all the deformed Soma-demons ("...If the King (Soma) becomes exhausted, they extend him from out of [the bowl]" ... and must be stolen by the Grail-knight, who is therefore the same as Indra or Hercules. Indeed, if the Grail mythos can be traced to Persian sources, to the "Cup of Jamshid," in which distant events appear by a sort of televisual magic, then the Grail may be considered not only structurally but also historically related to Iranian Haoma, or rather to its ritual cup or basin (Wilson, 1999).

The Grail of Jamshid

Wilson refers to the "Cup of Jamshid," known in Persian as the "Jaam-e Jam" and it is here that the Grail finds one of its greatest parallels, if not origins. Jamshid, a figure popular in Persian mythology since ancient times, "was said to have had a magical seven-ringed cup, the Jām-e Jam which was filled with the elixir of immortality and allowed him to observe the universe"(Eastburn, 2011). As the Persian poet Hafez (1326-1390) wrote of this miraculous vessel:

> Fetch, Saki! that wine, by which the goblet of Jamshed could boast of perspicacity in the midst of nonentity; give it to me, for through the grace of the cup, I may like Jamshed, explore the mysteries of the universe.
>
> Present me Saki! with that exhilarating potion...[9]

That the cup was believed to carry with it a potion of some effect, as with the Zoroastrian Haoma and cannabis infused wines of later Persian times, is clear from other verses from Hafez

> O you, sitting quiet on your tavern bench,
> pick up the cup and take your turn as Jamshid.
>
> If you don't want union, then don't seek the vision;
> Jam's Cup offers rewards to only the patient.
>
> They will lift off the veil from the Earth and stars,
> those holders and servers of the world-seeing cup.
>
> If you desire true secrets of mystery,
> Jam's Cup seeks only a constant lover.
>
> Like Jam, take a sip from both world's secrets,
> and cup's radiance will bring you awareness.[10]

As we have already seen in references from Khayyam, although the use of liquor was strictly forbidden and hashish mostly frowned upon by fundamental Islam, hashish-infused wines were in use in Persia among the more mystically minded. "Hashish is thought so badly of in Persia that it is usually spoken of, even by those who use it, by some nickname, as Aka-yi-Seyid ('Master Seyyid'[11]), Tuti-i-asrar ('The Parrot of mysteries'), or simply Asrar ('Mysteries'), the first two alluding to its green colour. One of the odes of Hafiz, beginning... 'O Parrot, who discoursest of mysteries, may thy beak never want sugar!'... is addressed to the drug" (Brown, 1893). This sort of symbolism, used to hide references to hashish, which was used by other Sufi Poets, was referred to as the "Language of the Birds." In regard to Hafiz's references to the use of Jamashid's Grail, it seems likely he used this well known ancient figure, to veil references to the sorts of cannabis-infused wines, that we know were partaken of in elaborate cups.

Jamashid is a very old mythical figure, and goes back to some of the earliest Indo-European mythology. "Jamshid is a famous hero of Zoroastrian tradition. He is the Yima of the Zendavesta and the Yama of Vedic mythology" (Cowell, 1874). In the Persian tradition, Yima's father was the first to press Haoma, and took of it to conceive him. Yima himself is credited with spreading the cultic use of Haoma. In the Indian accounts, a funeral hymn from the *Atharva Veda* records that "For Yama Soma juice flows clear, to Yama oblation is paid" (A.V.18.2) and the Rig Veda commands "To Yama pour the Soma" (R.V. 10.14.13). "Every competent scholar recognizes a close affinity between the Iranian Yima and the Hindu Yama, between the Soma-cult and the Haoma-cult..." (Hopkins, 2007). "Over time, the Avestan hero Yima Xšaēta became the world-ruling Shāh Jamshid of Persian legend and mythology" (Eastburn, 2011).

Others have also suggested the possibility that "the story of Jamshid's cup to be the basis for the Holy Grail" (Gowen, 1924). "[O]f the prototypes of this class the most striking in its relation to the Holy Grail is found in the legendary lore of the primitive home of the Aryan race. Long ago the Holy Grail was the Golden Cup of Jamshid, king of the Genii in Persia" (Krehbiel, 1891). As Sir Richard Burton also noted, "...the Jami-i-Jamshid, which may be translated either grail (cup) or mirror: it showed the whole world within its rim; and hence it was called Jam-i-Jeha-numa (universe exposing)"(Burton, 1880). This is a particularly interesting comment in regard to the role of cannabis in conjunction with magic mirrors, that will be discussed in Chapter 15 and which Burton himself was a user. Because of such associations, some modern translations of works referring to the "Jamshid's Cup," identify it with a "crystal ball" or a "crystal globe," and the term "Jaam-e Jam" has come to be used as slang for "television." The indication here is that one would stare into the cup after drinking from it, and see images in the reflection, as one would with a magic mirror.

> Jamshid often called Jam – is the greatest hero of Persian mythology.... Jam's cup ... is the vessel within which the secrets of Earthly powers is concealed. Naturally, we are all searching for it.
>
> Similarly, the quest for the Holy Grail pervades Western mythology. Mysterious powers are attributed to the Grail, often described as the golden cup from which Jesus drank wine at the Last Supper and which also was used to collect drops of his blood at the foot of the cross. The Grail is the symbol of prosperity, the secret of health and wealth. Parsival sought its elusive reality to save King Arthur's realm. The Knights Templar were rumoured to have found it during the Crusades in the Holy Land. As with Jam's Cup, the mysteries of the Holy Grail's existence and

power endure (Pourafzal & Montgomery, 2004).

The Persian poet Hafiz (1326-1390), who made a number of esoteric references to the Sufi use of hashish,[12] wrote how his "heart sought many a year the goblet of King Jam."[13] Interestingly, "Goblet of jam" is a "Colloquial term for marijuana" (Nordegren, 2002). This is thought to be "from the direct translation from Arabic m'juni akbar (a hashish-based confection)" (Dalzell &Victor, 2014); however, one is left wondering if there is an even deeper connection to the term, in light of the information that we have been discussing.

Hafiz's references to the Cup of Jamishid, seem to also have a deep similarity the grail mythology, with some translators of his poems, even using the term Grail. Shahriari Shahriari (1999) gives us the following interpretation:

> For years my heart was in search of the Grail
> What was inside me, it searched for, on the trail
>
> That pearl that transcends time and place
> Sought of divers whom oceans sail
>
> My quest to the Magi my path trace
> One glance solved the riddles that I Braille
>
> Found him wine in hand and happy face
> In the mirror of his cup would watch a hundred detail
>
> I asked, "when did God give you this Holy Grail?"
> Said, "on the day He hammered the world's first nail!"
>
> Even the unbeliever had the support of God
> Though he could not see, God's name would always hail.
>
> All the tricks of the mind would make God seem like fraud
> Yet the Golden Calf beside Moses' rod would just pale.
>
> And the one put on the cross by his race
> His crime, secrets of God would unveil
>
> Anyone who is touched by God's grace
> Can do what Christ did, without fail.[14]

Other translations, such as Wilberforce Clarke's 1891 version, begin with the "Search for the cup of Jamshid" instead of "Grail," and a more recent translation gives us this version of the first stanza of the poem, "For years, my questing heart kept asking me; where on earth Jamshed's ancient grail could be" (Foreman, 2015). In these telling verses from Hafiz, we see references to the Zoroastrian magi, as well as the prophetic contents of the cup, and its use as a magic mirror. As well there are Christian elements suggesting it also contains the healing power of the Christ.

All elements inherent in Grail mythology.

As a relationship between magic mirrors and cannabis came to clearly be a part of later magic (Chapter 15) it is worth noting that the Cup of Jamshid was stared into for seeing visions. This is interesting in relation to the mystery plant and wine additive dādhi that was discussed in Chapter 3. As Nawal Nasrallah notes, from prepared descriptions of "the drink's physical description, we know that it is clear, so clear, indeed, that when you look at it, it reflects your image like a mirror. It has a reddish hue as if fire or meteor is burning in it. The word dādhi itself is associated with light." (Nasrallah, 2007). This description also brings to mind that of Ezra's cup of fire, as well as the cannabis-infused wines of the earlier Zoroastrians, which were discussed earlier in Chapters 1 and 2.

In regard to the Scythians and the hypothesis that European Grail legends may have been derived through them, as well as pre-Crusade elements of the Grail mythos already in Europe, it is important to note the Scythian trade routes extended deep into Persia, and some branches of Scythians spoke Persian dialects. As well, as noted, archaeological evidence indicates that the Scythians not only burnt cannabis, but drank cannabis and opium preparations such as Haoma in ritual cups. Referring to a perceived conflict with Persian stories of the Cup of Jamshid, and their theory of a Scythian origin of the Grail mythos, Littleton and Malcor acknowledge that later Persian "connections ... may reflect another independent development from a common Iranian tradition about the quest for the sacred that may have reached Europe in the early Middle Ages. This would not affect the suggestion that the core of the tradition arrived a millennium earlier and reflects a Northeast Iranian rather than 'Persian' provenance" (Littleton & Malcor, 1994/2000). The writing duo also provide an excellent overview of the Persian/Iranian influences on the Grail mythos, and the various writers who have explored these connections.

Thus the ideas of a Scythian origins of the Grail mythology versus the later adaption of a Persian mythology picked up in the Mid-East during the Crusades, need not be viewed as competing theories, but rather complimentary ones, with the Scythian mythos already in Europe, being a basis, for the later embracement of the Persian stories defused through Islamic influences in the early medieval Mid-East. Littleton and Malcor, who noted the pre-existing elements of Grail mythology in Europe before the crusades, state these commonalities with the Persian story and the Cup of Jamshid, exist "because of the common Indo-European heritage of Ireland and India.... a common 'Aryan' heritage" (Littleton & Malcor, 1994/2000). In this respect it is also important to remember that cannabis has been located at Celtic sites, and that the ritual use of cannabis was present in prehistoric Europe, along with the late archaeologist Andrew Sherrat's suggestion that the widespread evidence of corded wear identified the widespread use of a cannabis beverage.

As with the stories of the Grail, there also seems to be some Jewish and Christian symbolism intended with Jamshid's Cup. We saw above in Hafiz's poem that through it one "Can do what Christ did, without fail." As well, "King Jamshed has often been combined with King Sulayman. Like Solomon's throne, Jamshed's too is carried by the wind, and he too boasts a ring that makes him the masters of djinns and demons" (Schimmel, 2014). "Probably the Persian-Arabic legend of the cup of Jamshyd, in which the mysteries of the world could be perceived, and the stories of Solomon's miraculous cup can be traced back to... Gnostic sources" (Jung & von Franz, 1960/1970).

The Elixir of Jerusalem

To return to the Templars, and their association with the Grail mythology and Assassins, the question remains, what evidence do we have of the Templars own actual use of cannabis. Dr. Camillo Di Cicco, a dermatologist from Rome Italy, in his paper "Heresy and Science in the Middle Ages," refers to a to a cannabis-infused wine preparation used by the Templars under the name of the "Elixir of Jerusalem":

> The Templars created a mixture with pulp of Aloe, pulp of Hemp and wine of palm, called Elisir of Jerusalem, with therapeutic and nourishing property, they used the Arborescens Aloe for its antiseptic, bactericidal and fungicide action and for its capacity to penetration in the deeper layers of the skin....
>
> ...Interestingly cannabis is the safest natural or synthetic medication proven successful in the treatment of most forms of epilepsy.
>
> The esoteric inheritance and the alchemical-spagyrics acquaintances were handed from the Templars to the Crocifers. From these Orders, that one of Saint Giacomo or Jacobite managed many Hospitals during the XV° century. To the Jacobite monks, in quality of experts in the cure of the diseases of the skin, the task was entrusted to cure the wounded soldiers during the Crusades, in the Hospitals of Malta and Cyprus. To them, in fact, was attributed the capability to create miraculous ointments.
>
> In such historical context it must estimate the work of the Templars concluding with recognizing that they, anticipating the times, had a modern vision of the Medicine and, although were considered heretics and consigned to the fire (Di Cicco, 2012).[15]

In regards to this "Elixir of Jerusalem," a connection might be noted in the fact that "The Holy Jerusalem" was one of the names used for Hashish by Sufi groups in medieval times (Rosenthal, 1971). Clearly preparations such as this were in use by certain Muslim mystics in this time period, and the idea that the Templars were consuming cannabis-infused wine as a sacred elixir, is very intriguing. Moreover, this claim has appeared in a number of other books, generally ones regarding the use of aloe vera. "[T]he Knights Templar were said to have developed a brew or concoction of palm wine, aloe vera pulp and hemp – an elixir that they called the 'elixir of Jerusalem' and to which they attributed their health, strength and longevity" (Barcroft & Myskja, 2003). Similar claims have been made elsewhere.[16] However, none list any sort of source document for this claim, and the furthest I have been able to trace it back is to Marc Schweizer's 1994 book, *Aloe the Health and Healing Plant*:

> The initiation into the medicinal virtues and powers

> of aloe and hemp were a part of the teachings of the Ismaelien sect, one of whose most illustrious representatives was the doctor and philosopher Avicenne.
>
> According to legend, Hasan ibn al-Sabbah, the old man of the mountain and chief of the brotherhood of "assassins," was inspired by Avicenne. Their doctrine included the apprenticeship by degree of the secrets of the "seven sebayahs" or "knowledge of the right road" by which the Ismaeliens conferred magic powers to their adepts. The aloe plant and hemp grown around the Alamut fortress (northern Persia) were considered by the Ismaeliens as a kidney vech, an antidote and an elixir of long life. It is said that one of the secrets of the longevity of the Templer [sic] Knights was found in the famous Jerusalem elixir composed of hashish, aloe pulp and palm wine (Schweizer, 1994).

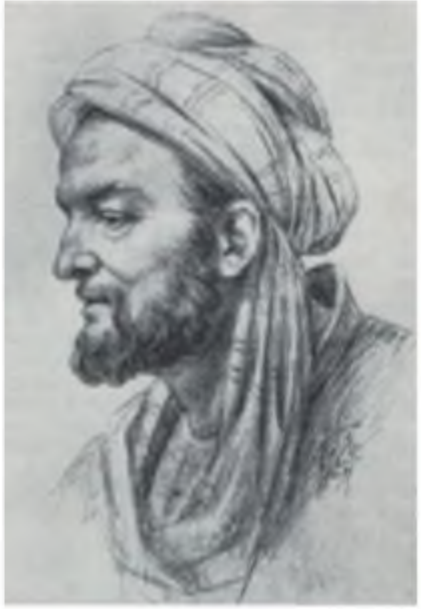
Andreas Schweizer refers to Avicenna, the famous Arabic "Father of Medicine." As number of Templars were well versed in Arabic, and it has been suggested that due to their interest in medicine they would have obviously taken an interest in Avicenna's *Canon of Medicine*, which was a major source of influence on European medicine well into the 17th century after it was translated into Latin and released throughout Europe. Umberto Eco worked this connection into his classic occult tale *Foucault's Pendulum*:

> They [the Templars] had read Avicenna, and they were not ignorant, like the Europeans. How could you live alongside a tolerant, mystical, libertine culture for two centuries without succumbing to its allure, particularly when you compared it to Western culture, which was crude, vulgar, barbaric, and Germanic? (Eco, 1988).

Allegedly, Avicenna's father had been initiated into the Islamic sect the Ismailis, who as noted have long been associated with the esoteric use of hashish, with the Hashishin being an offshoot of the group. Avicenna's "father was ... an intellectual who belonged to a hashish cult" (Simmons, 2002). Likely because of this connection, and elements of Ismaili doctrine present in Avicenna's own writings, many have suggested that "The great physician ibn-Sina (Avicenna) ... was an Isma'ili" (Hitti, 1968).

Avicenna is a noted figure in the history of medicine, and cannabis preparations were clearly a part of that tradition. "Cannabis (hashish) was introduced into medicine by Arab physicians and was known to Avicenna in the tenth century" (Jones, 1983). "Many well-known Arabic doctors described medicinal uses of cannabis, especially Avicenna" (Russo, 2013). One 17th century Latin medical text, refers to "Cannabis ex Avicenna" i.e. "Cannabis from

Avicenna," indicating the strong association he had with the herb. Avicenna based his notable work, the *Canon of Medicine* on much older material, such as Galen and Dioscorides, and also studied the role of herbs in China, India, Persia and Arabia. Whole sections of Avicenna's *Canon* deal with cannabis.[17]



Avicenna

Avicenna's placement of cannabis in Book IV of his *Canon*, with *Hyoscyamus niger*, and *Datura fatuosa* makes it clear he was well aware of not only its medical, but psychoactive effects. In regard to the suggestion that cannabis-infused wines may have come through this avenue, Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan, has noted medieval references to Kabbalists drinking a cup of "strong wine of Avicenna" that was said to induce trance. Kaplan has also noted that early Kabbalistic magical schools who used magic and other means of communion for mystic exploration, that "some practices include the use of 'grasses,' which were possibly psychedelic drugs" (Kaplan, 1982). The exact recipe of "strong wine of Avicenna" remains unknown, however, but as Avicenna works refer to substances such as cannabis, opium and datura, some speculation in this regard is warranted, especially considering what we know about Avicenna's connection to the Ismailis, and that cults somewhat heretical association with both hashish and wine. It should be noted that opium was also mixed with wine, and there have been allegations that Avicenna was "addicted" to the drug, and even that "Avicenna himself may actually have died from an overdose of opium" (Duarte, 2005). Such preparations, as we shall see later, appear in European alchemy. However, the possibility that there may be a connection to the claims of the Templars wine in this, remains but a possibility.

In this regard, Schweizer's reference to the "famous Jerusalem elixir" is more than an overstatement, as so little is to be found in reference to this concoction, and those who have written about it have cited no historical source. As I myself have been researching the history of cannabis for over a quarter-century, and read extensively on both the Templars and Ismailis, I am questioning the authenticity of this, as much as I would like it to be true. Unfortunately, much of the source material on the Templars is in Latin, or medieval French, and possibly locked away in some archive at the Vatican Library, if modern conspiracy theorists are to be believed!

However, there are contemporary references to cannabis-infused wines that show up in Europe in this same time period, such as a *A Treasury of Health* (1277) authored by Pope John XXI (1215-1277), who was friendly with the Templars and the advancement of medical science, which he held a deep personal interest in. *A Treasury of Health* is described as a compendium of medieval medical knowledge "conteynyng many profitable medycines gathered out of Hypocrates, Galen and Auycen [Avicenna]," which offered some descriptive medical recipes. The reference to Galen, whose references to ancient use of cannabis have often been quoted, and even more so Avicenna, whose relationship with cannabis and the Ismailis was just discussed. Besides recommending the juice of hemp to take away the fever, "The ioyce of Hempe, afore the fyt taketh away the feuer" in a "remedy against a carbuncle," Pope John XXI also recommend a cannabis-infused wine:

> Remedies - Agaynst the scabe and french pokes cap. LXII
>
> ... Take of red colewortes, fengreke Percely, sothernewod, tansey, strawbery leaues, and suet, brere leaues, plantayn leaues, hempe, redmadder smallage, cransebill, Alam, nuttes, before al thynges let them be sodden together in pure whyte wyne, & put therto a lytle hony, giue it vnto the pacient early & late, and anoynte ye wound wtout when he hath dronke of ye sayd potion, & lay theron a lefe of red colewortes & keape the same contynually ouer it, it openeth it and hath ben often prouyd.

Pope John XXI's comments coming from a time when the Papacy did not consider arts directed at the healing of the body, as distracting from the churches directive of the salvation of the soul, a view the Vatican would take in later times. Interestingly, after his death, rumors about Pope John XXI being a necromancer began to appear, and that his death was punishment from God for composing a heretical treatise. Although this as well cannot be seen as direct evidence of the Templar's use of cannabis infused wines, it does indicate that the use of this combination did come into play, when they were a source of both trade and knowledge from the Arabic world, making it into Europe.

In relation to this it is interesting to note the use of cannabis and other herbs in various tincture preparations of alchemy, known as quintessences and arcana, wine and alcohol infusions, that begin to appear in alchemical texts in the Mid-East as early as 1300 and occur later in a number of alchemical and medical treatises in Europe. References to a tincture were also associated with the Grail and the Templars by Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall in his controversial book *Mysterium Baphometis revelatum, seu Fratres Militiæ Templi, qua Gnostici et quidem Ophiani, Apostasiæ, Idoloduliæ et Impuritatis convicti, per ipsa eorum Monumenta*, (Discovery of the Mystery of Baphomet, by which the Knights Templars, like the Gnostics and Ophites, are convicted of Apostasy, of Idolatry and of moral Impurity, by their own Monuments) (1818).

The "Tincture of Fire" and the Holy Grail

It's important to remember that von Hammer-Purgstall's work is highly controversial, and far from accepted as historical fact. Although it became deeply influential on later secret societies, and also in the conceptions of Baphomet, a hermaphroditic deity allegedly worshiped by the Templars, and now seen as the goat-headed figure depicted in the famous image of Eliphias Levi (who in turn based it on the descriptions of von Hammer-Purgstall). It would be far reaching to offer this work as historical or archaeological evidence for the actual activities of the Templars. None-the-less, it is interesting speculation on an area clouded with mystery, and an association with the earlier Libertine Gnostic sects that was suggested by von Hammer-Purgstall, could well explain some of the alleged crimes the Templars were accused of, such as ritual sodomy, and a secret rejection of Christianity.

Despite its clear influence on later occult thought and secret societies, until recently *Mysterium Baphometis Revelatum*, itself was mostly clouded in mystery as, except for a few excerpts here and there it remained untranslated out of the Latin and various European tongues it had been composed in. Thanks to the hard work and diligence of Tracy R. Twyman, this is no longer the case, and an English translation has now been made available.

Mysterium Baphometis Revelatum was largely based on iconography, along with cups and bowls, that von Hammer-Purgstall claimed to have gathered from various European church locations that had formerly been Templar sites. After the publication of *Mysterium Baphometis Revelatum*, a number of scholars had concluded that these were works of forgery created by "Rosicrucian or alchemical quacks, who fattened upon the credulity of that arch-virtuoso, Rudolf II" (King, 1887). The suggestion here being that these were works sold to the patron of the occult arts, King of Bohemia, and Hapsburg Holy Roman Emperor Rudolph II (1552-1612). King's suggestion of forgeries created in the late 18th century seems to be somewhat substantiated by the activities of figures like Schröpfer, and Cagliostro at that time. As we shall see in Chapters 20 and 21, these "artifacts" would have fit in well in quasi-Masonic rites that figures like these were known to perform.

However, most researchers themselves agree that von Hammer-Purgstall himself was a sincere researcher, and the general view from critics is, he was provided with forgeries that he mistook for authentic. That all the items collected from a variety of sites could have been forgeries though, itself seems suspect. In this regard, some researchers have been more favorable, such as Thomas Wright, "...the comparison of facts stated in the confessions of many of the Templars, as preserved in the official reports, with the images and sculptured cups and coffers given by Von Hammer-Pürgstall, lead to the conclusion that there is truth in the explanation he gives ... and that the Templars, or at least some of them, had secretly adopted a form of the rites of Gnosticism..." (Wright, 1865). John Charpentier, who examined some of the artifacts in question, claimed in his *L'Odres des Templiers*: "...Their authenticity cannot be doubted: they are indeed Gnostic idols, of degenerated Valentinian character ... probably of Ophite origin; which means that von Hammer-Purgstall was right" (Charpentier, 1947).[18]

Unfortunately, many of the monuments, cups, bowls, and other relics, described in *Mysterium Baphometis Revelatum*, have gone missing in the intervening centuries since it was written, and the stigma of forgery has remained. Hopefully with the re-publication of *MBR*, what remains of these items, can be re-examined with modern dating techniques and other technology. Twyman has already located several such items in part of her research into *MBR*.

Von Hammer-Purgstall's believed that what these images designated was the Templar adoption of ancient Gnostic rituals, and put forth that these rites had been continued by Masonic groups of his own day. In this respect, it marks one of the founding conspiracy theories about Freemasons, elements of which have persisted to the modern day, and become part of the occult lore around the Templars and the Grail.

Von Hammer-Purgstall was not the first to suggest a connection of the Templars to the rites of the ancient Gnostics. In *Versuch über die Beschuldigungen welche dem Tempelherrenorden gemacht worden, und über dessen Geheimniß* (Attempts at the accusations made to the order of the Templars, and on the secrets of this, as well as some remarks on the rise of Freemasonry), written in 1782, Christoph Friedrich Nicolai suggested that the Templars had been influenced by Manichean Gnostics, and that they had adopted grades of initiations based on this from the Saracens. As well, von Hammer-Purgstall refers to the works of Karl Gottlieb Anton, author of *Versuch Einer Geschichte Des Tempelherrnordens*, (An Attempted History of the Templars of the North, 1771), who suggested a Gnostic-related etymology for the name of the deity the Templars were accused of worshiping, Baphomet.

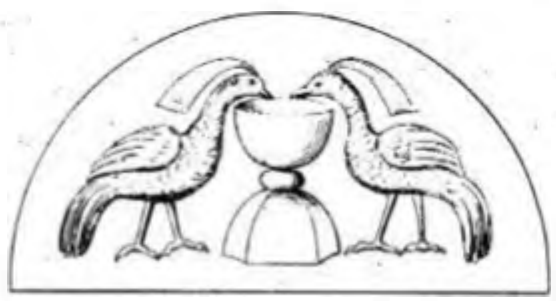
In the view of Anton "mete" taken from the name Baphometis referred to Gnosis (knowledge), whereas von Hammer-Purgstall saw this term as derived from a epithet of the Gnostic Goddess of Wisdom, Sophia "Mete is none other than the Sophia ... who is known otherwise as Acamoth..." (von Hammer-Purgstall, 1818). The first part of the name Baphomet, however, according to von Hammer-Purgstal-l's interpretation of Anton's work, relates to either "Baptism" or "Tincture." "The true sense of this Greek expression, Baphe meteos ... is, 'Tincture of Mete; or 'Baptism of Mete'" (von Hammer-Purgstall, 1818).[19]

> [The word] ... Baphen, or Bapheion here signifies nothing but the mystical tincture, or the Gnostic baptism, the theory put forth below with proof from the writings of the Church Fathers and the mystical bowls of which three are preserved in the treasury at Caesareo-Regius, which were used for this Ophite baptism (von Hammer-Purgstall, 1818).

Von Hammer-Purgstall believed that images of cups, bowls, some with mortars, as well as images of them in the iconography, not only identified the continuation of the Gnostic rites, but also represented the Holy Grail. "It ought to be understood that, under the custody of St. Graal, those brothers of the militia [the Templars], as custodians of the Gnostic chalice, were initiated into the gnostic mystery of iniquity" (von Hammer-Purgstall, 1818). The adoption of the Knights Templar of these practices, according to von Hammer-Purgstall, took place when the "knights confederated with the Assassins and... [were] imbued with their nefarious doctrine..."(von Hammer-Purgstall, 1818).

Here are various images that von Hammer-Purgstall associated with the Grail and attributed to Templar iconography. At the right, in association with one of the mysterious "heads of Baphomet" that the Templars were accused of worshiping is the disembodied eye, reminiscent of "eye of the soul," referred to in Zoroastrian references to the cannabis infused wine, as well as Haoma and Soma symbology.

6.



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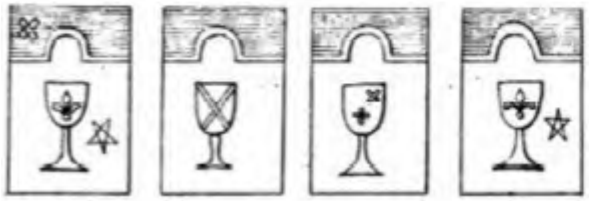

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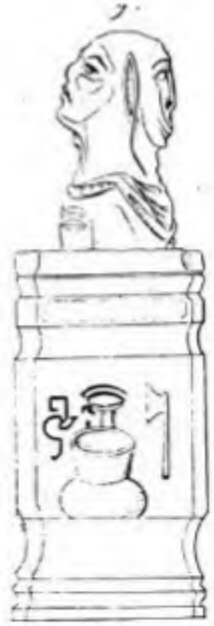
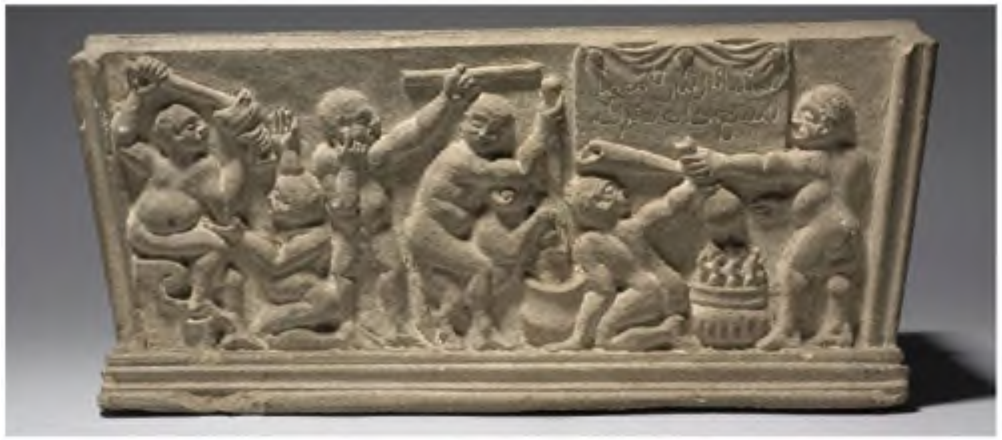


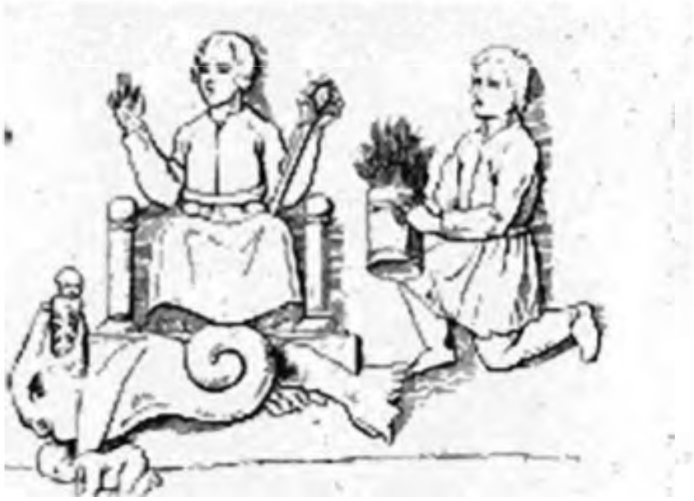
Von Hammer-Purgstall also noted the Hermetic influence of Gnosticism, in Chapter 4 of the *Corpus*

Hermeticum, (Discourse of Hermes to Tat on the Mixing Bowl or Monad.) A text which also bring to mind the ingestion of substances in order to receive enlightenment. "Baptize thyself with this cup's baptism." In the tale, Hermes explains that the God of all did not place Nous, mind, (likely here in more of a divine sense, distinguished from reason) in all people incarnated on earth; most had to seek it out in a "mixing bowl":

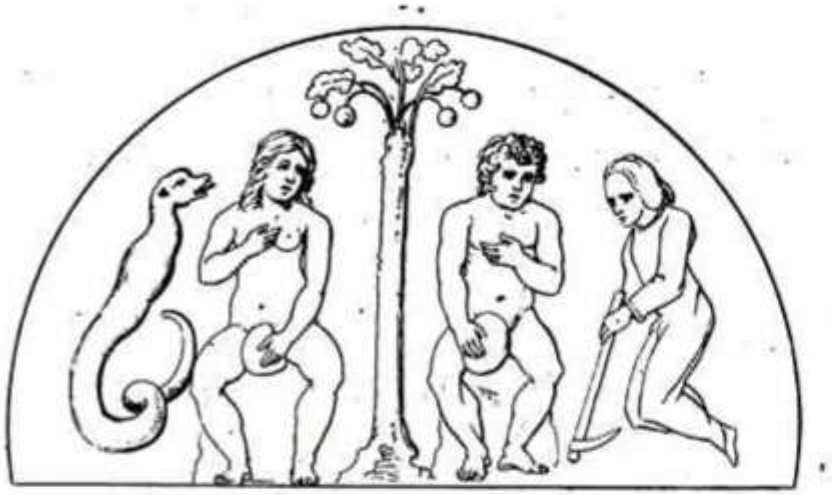
> He filled a great mixing bowl with it and sent it below, appointing a herald whom he commanded to make the following proclamation to human hearts: "Immerse yourself in the mixing bowl if your heart has the strength, if it believes you will rise up again to the one who sent the mixing bowl below, if it recognizes the purpose of your coming to be."



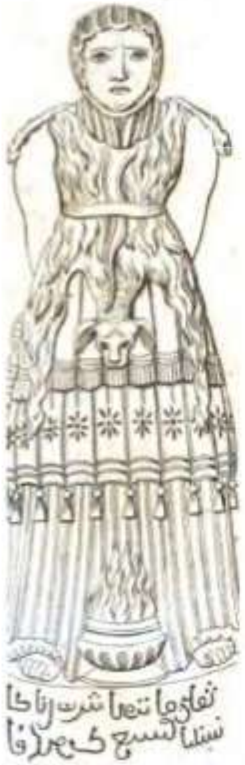
This relief, found on an ancient casket that was located by Twyman with other relics that appeared in von Hammer-Purgstal-l's book, in storage at the British Museum, where she had them photographed. This collection was apparently owned by Duc de Blacas, who was known to have close ties with the renegade Freemason Joseph de Maistre. Some have suggested they were forged at his bequest. Note the Arabic writing on the banner. I mention it for the mortar being used in the chalice (upper left), and larger grinding bowls, or mixing bowls (near the center). As well as "what looks like an alchemical vessel by the neck, holding it over the flames of a brazier"[right] (Rivera & Twyman, 2015). Grinding of cannabis with a mortar and pestle, both small and large, for use of cannabis in beverages, is a technique that has continued since ancient times. Depictions of Lord Shiva grinding cannabis for the beverage bhang in this fashion can be found in Indian paintings, and Sikh Nihangs still prepare cannabis as their sacramental drink sukidan with large mortar and pestles like that depicted in the center of the painting. Heating of cannabis converts THC to psychoactive THC-A, and this may be what is indicated by the image on the far right. Is this more evidence for the "elixir of Jerusalem"?



Here we see a bucket of herbs in association with some serpentine figure, said by von Hammer-Purgstall to represent the Gnostic demiurge Ialdabaoth, who kept humanity trapped on the earthly plain through a cycle of rebirth. Von Hammer-Purgstall describes "The figures standing by the throne indicate peoples bringing as a gift to a Templar or Gnostic (or, if you will, to the Order of the Temple or to the Gnosis sitting on the throne) fruits and animals of the earth (grain and egg)" (von Hammer-Purgstall, 1818). However, I am inclined to speculate at other vegetable matter than that, such as a bushel of cannabis flowering tops, as that would be an odd depiction of harvested grain and eggs. Note the similar serpent image in the Garden of Eden depiction from von Hammer-Purgstall, and death, with the traditional harvesting tool of cannabis, the Scythe.

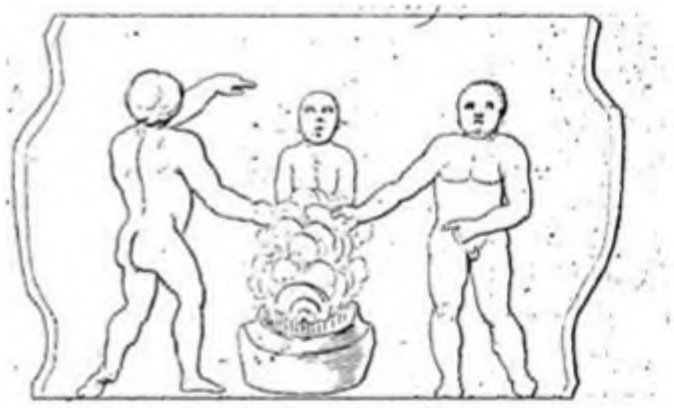


Von Hammer-Purgstall claimed the Templars had a rite known as the "Baptism of Fire," and it was his view that this was related to a Gnostic rite indicated by the same name, which included fumigation with incense and the Templar Grails were also used for this same purpose. "In support of [the translations of the name Baphomet] as 'spiritual baptism' and 'tincture of fire' there are the sculptured bowls at the feet of our idols, full of fire so as to demonstrate how that mystic rite should be administered" (von Hammer-Purgstall, 1818).[20]



Von Hammer-Purgstall claimed vessels like the one burning at the feet of this alleged Templar monument, like the chalices, were to be identified with the Grail and used for burning "incense." Von Hammer-Purgstall's theories were widely accepted and discussed for decades, as the *Encyclopædia Americana* recorded:

> Baphomet signifies Βαφη Μητεος, baptism of Metis, baptism of fire, or the Gnostic baptism, an enlightening of the mind.... This baptism was performed by cups and chalices.... These vessels are said to have been fixed at the feet of certain images, and to have been filled with fire, by which the initiation in their shameful mysteries was completed in the secrets of the Templars (Encyclopædia Americana, 1829).



Though the use to which they were employed is not clear from writings, from the appearance of the monuments where these bowls are seen flaming ... and ... it is to be affirmed that incense was used inside the braziers, in order to nourish the fire with burning materials. Thus the Neophytes standing at this bowl, with the incense giving forth a smell, were being spiritually prepared for that marriage which among the Ophite Gnostics took the place of baptism, the Eucharist and of all the sacraments. The presence of fire, which we see everywhere glowing from these bowls placed at the feet of the idols..., proves this hypothesis.... [We see] a Neophyte with

> the appearance of an infant placed by a parent at such a bowl, surrounded by a whirling cloud of smoke from the incense.... This representation, since it is fashioned on the bowl ... plainly demonstrates its use (von Hammer-Purgstall, 1818).[21]

The images referred to by von Hammer-Purgstall, clearly indicate the inhalation of fumes and suffumigation rituals from ritual bowls: von Hammer-Purgstall said these images particularly represented a Gnostic-based initiation ritual Baptism of Fire. This is in an era when it is believed pipe smoking was unknown in the "old world," so techniques similar to those of the Scythians were used for inhaling cannabis fumes. This recalls the incense that contained a "wonder" referred to in the Book of Ieou, a text popular with the Ophites, that was discussed in Chapter 2 Also, the 11th century Arabic magical grimoire, *The Ghayat AlHakim* was later modified and translated into Latin as *The Picatrix* in 13th century Spain, which has references to fumigation with hashish, and it has been suggested that the Templars may have been familiar with this grimoire, through accusations about keeping a human head as an oracle, as "the charge ... recalls the magical texts of the period. In particular, *The Picatrix* gives instructions as to how to use a severed head for magical purposes. Again there is an implication that the Templars were magicians" (Nicholson, 2010). According to Legman, at least one actual head was found and confiscated in the simultaneous raids on the Templars, at the Paris Temple. "It was a large gilt female bust in silver, which contained – it was hollow – a skull wrapped in red linen shroud and bearing a label marked 'Caput LXVIII m' (Head no. 58)" (Legman, 1966). Some have suggested this was an inventory number indicating other heads, which would fit with von Hammer-Purgstall's alleged artifacts.

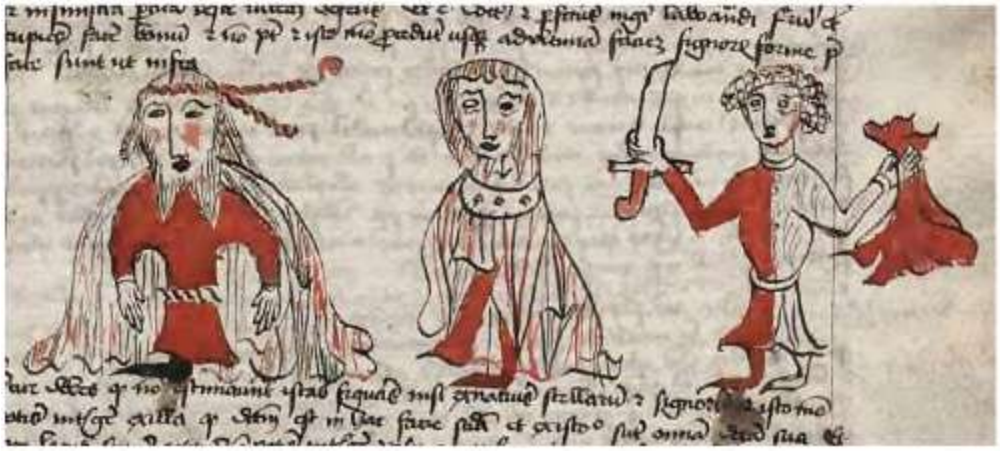
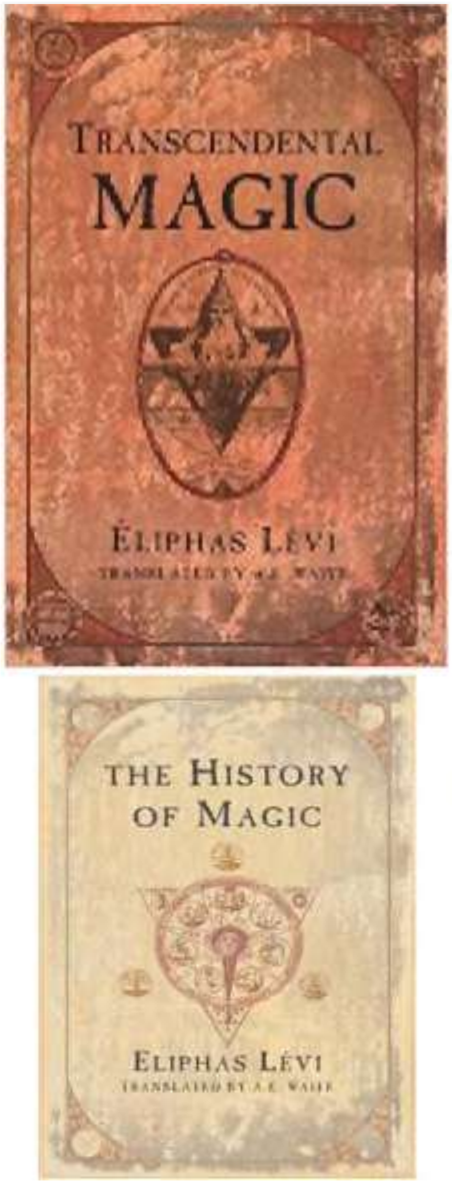


Illustration from a medieval hand copied edition of the Picatrix.

Referring to the "Kasei Dervischan, that is, the 'cup of the Dervishes'" in relation to "the chalice ... a symbol of the Templars," von Hammer-Purgstall concludes based upon his evidence that "After these things there remains no doubt that the most celebrated bowl of the Middle Ages, under the name of the Holy Grail, signifies nothing but a symbol of the Templar community and of Gnostic wisdom.... Should you seek to discover the place where the most Holy Grail can be found, one always returns to the Orient..." (von Hammer-Purgstall, 1818).[22]

Curiously as von Hammer-Purgstall's view is that the Templars became infected with the Gnostic heresies through their contact and association with the Hashishin, and he wrote a book *The History of the Assassins*, (1813), which detailed their use of hashish, he never directly implicated the Templars with the use of cannabis or drugs in any form, in either book. One would think that if his intent was purely to demonize the Templars, and with the evidence of fumigation rites, this would have been an obvious thing to draw attention too.

The von Hammer-Purgstall's images of Baphomet, certainly acted as the prototype for the image of the "god of the Templars" as popularized by the French Magician, Eliphas Levi, which is still popularly used in this context to this day, and Levi acknowledged this influence. This in turn has come to be associated with the Devil in both Satanism and Witchcraft in our own time.

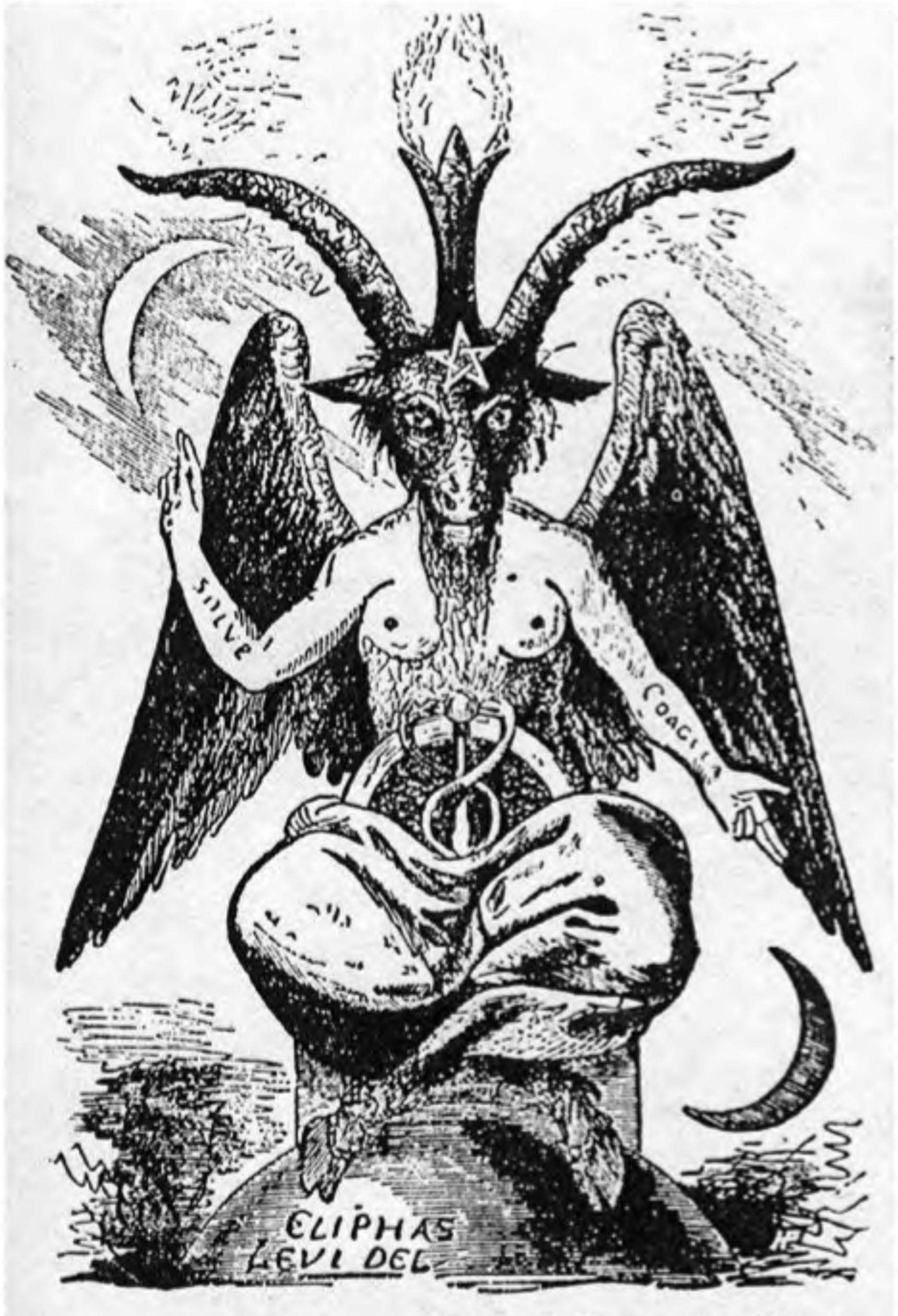


Eliphas Levi (1810-1875) with his influential works Transcendental Magic (1854) and The History of Magic (1859)

We approach the domain of black magic. We are about to assail, even in his sanctuary, the darksome deity of the Sabbath, the formidable goat of Mendes, the phantom full of horrors, the dragon of every theogony, the Ahriman of the Persians, the Typhon of the Egyptians, the Python of the Greeks, the old serpent of the Jews, the bearded idol of medieval alchemists, the Baphomet of the Templars. Let us declare, for the edification of the uninitiated, for the satisfaction of M. le Comte de Mirville, for the justification of Bodin the demonologist, and for the greater glory of the Church, which has persecuted the Templars, burned the magicians, and excommunicated the Freemasons, let us say boldly and loudly, that all initiates of the occult sciences – I speak of the inferior initiates and the betrayers of the Great Arcanum – have adored, do, and will always adore that which is signified by the frightful figure of the sabbatic goat.

Yes, in our profound conviction, the grand masters of the order of the Templars adored Baphomet, and caused him to be adored by their initiates; yes, there have existed, and there may still be, assemblies presided over by this figure, seated on a throne and with a flaming torch between its horns; only the worshipers of this sign do not think it the representation of the devil as we do, but rather that of the god Pan, the god of our modem philosophical schools, the god of the Alexandrian theurgists, and of our present neoplatonic mystics, the god of Lamartine and Cousin, of Spinoza, Plato, and the early Gnostics...

A sculptured casket, unearthed in the ruins of an ancient commandry of the Templars, was observed by antiquaries to be a baphometic figure, conformable in its attributes to our goat of Mendes and the androgyne of Khunrath. It is bearded, but with the entire body of a woman; in one hand it holds the sun, in the other the moon, joined to it by chains. This virile head is a beautiful allegory which attributes to thought alone the first and creative cause. The head here represents mind, and the female body matter. The stars, bound to the human form and directed by that nature of which intelligence is the head, have also a sublime significance. The terrible Baphomet is, in fact, like all monstrous enigmas of ancient science, nothing more than an innocent and even pious hieroglyph (Levi/Waite, 1886).[23]



From Levi's *Transcendental Magic.*

Eliphas Levi's Baphomet, "The Sabbatic Goat of Mendes"

Interestingly, the same chapter that Levi opens with the above references to Baphomet and the Templars also contains a recipe for a cannabis and opium-infused wine, as one of the "'Conditions of Success in Infernal Evocations' … every five days, after sunset, one must get drunk on wine in which five heads of black poppies and five ounces of bruised hemp have been steeped, the whole being contained in a cloth woven by a prostitute, or, strictly, the first cloth at hand may be used, if woven by a woman" (Levi/Waite, 1886).

The Secret Rule, and The Baptism of Fire

Confirmation of the claims in *Mysterium Baphometis* etc., were, for a short time at least, thought to be found in the form of documents claimed to have been composed by the Templars themselves. In 1877, a Dr. Mertzdorff, a German Mason, presented what he claimed were copies of actual Templar documents from 1240 A.D. that were being held in the Vatican archives, and which had been transcribed by a Frederick Munter, a Danish scientist, near the end of the 18th century. In the *Guilt of the Templars*, Legman refers to court testimony that a Grand master had ordered the confiscation of the "rule" and other Templar documents, and many copies were destroyed. There is also the long-held view that the French Chancellor, Guillaume de Nogaret, "destroyed whatever he could find of the Templars' at the time of the trial" (Legman, 1966). In regard to questions at the Templars trial about secret documents that may have recorded references to the sorts of rituals the Templars were accused of, Legman notes that it "is also possible that effort was being made to suppress 'the bad and perverse additions...' (as noted in... [a] deposition), i.e. the 'Secret Rule' or some Gnostic or heretical additions to St. Bernard's [the original founder of the Templars] original Rule, perhaps actually committed to writing ... but now utterly lost" (Legman, 1966). There are no contemporary references to a copy of the "Secret Rule" being found at the time of the trial, however it is likely if such a rules existed, it would have been transmitted orally, if it had said the sorts of things alleged.

Mertzdorff's *The Secret Rule*, and *The Baptism of Fire* followed the same ritual gnostic themes suggested in Von Hammer-Purgstall's *Mysterium Baphometis Revelatum*, so closely, that they have generally been considered forgeries. Although von Hammer-Purgstall does mention Munter, so the *Baptism of Fire* at least, seem to have pre-dated his own work.

Mark Amaru Pinkham, who seems to believe in the authenticity of the documents, writes, "Permission to indulge in all manner of Templar heresy can be found in this document, including defilement of the Cross, denial of Christ as the Saviour, sexual liaison, and the worship of the idolic head known as Baphomet" (Pinkham, 2006). Moreover, the document states of the Catholic religion; "The Church is the Synagogue of Antichrist." References in the "Secret Rule" to those who came from "Overseas fed with manna and divine visions. They are holy. God is with them, and have the Treasury Heavenly Wisdom" leaves one wondering if this might be a veiled reference to the potential hashish use by the Templars we have been exploring.

Gershon Legman, who was skeptical of their authenticity notes, that the documents also recorded that the Templars "'accept fraternally' such heretics as the Albigensians [Cathars] and Bulgars [from where we get the term 'buggery'], as well as Saraceans, Druses, and 'those who inhabit Lebanon.' i.e. the Assassins, or Hashish-eaters. All that is lacking, of course, is to state that the Knights Templar were required to take hashish ... as well" (Legman, 1966). In Legman's view, "Unfortunately ... this 'Secret Rule' is blatantly an early-nineteenth-century Masonic fake. Its author has clearly picked up the reference to the Gnostic 'Baptism of Fire' from von Hammer-Purgstall's lightning-flash of insight as to the relation of the Templars to Gnosticism, in his *Mysterium Baphometis Revelatum* in 1818..." (Legman, 1966).

> It is obvious that the anonymous forger of this improbable document, [is] somewhere between its pretended date of discovery, "about 1780," allegedly by Bishop Munter of Denmark in the Vatican archives (!) and its publication by Mertzdorff in 1877 ... [Metzdorff] cannot be assumed to have invented all this. Particularly in his allusions to the Assassins and Druses ... it seems certain that he based himself document he could find to give verisimilitude to his work, either in the original trial record of the French archives ... or in later works known to Freemasons, for the benefit of whose pretended descendants from the Templars the forgery was almost certainly executed... [T]he real date of the bogus "Secret Rule" is therefore in all probability later than that of von Hammer-Purgstall's Mysterium Baphometis Revelatum of 1818, from which source the rapprochement with the Gnostics was most likely gleaned, as was that with the 'Assacis' or Hashish-eaters from Hammer's History of the Assassins (Legman, 1966).

Although *The Secret Rule* and *The Baptism of Fire* are generally regarded as fakes, meant to demonize Freemasons through their alleged association with the Knights Templars, and thus the "diabolical" rights they were accused of, along the lines that *The Protocols of Zion*, was a forgery meant to demonize the Jews, there are those who still hold to their authenticity. As with von Hammer-Purgstall's ^I*Mysterium Baphometis Revelatum*, there is renewed interest in these documents, and some it seems, such as Pinkham, are not quite ready to write them off as forgeries in light of more current historical information.

Whether actual Templar icons and documents or not, the claims of von Hammer-Purgstall and later Mertzdorff, about Templar connections with the Gnostics, certainly augmented the flavor of later Freemasonry and the Occult world in general.

Influenced by such claims, the sensationalist anti-Masonic writer and conspiracy theorist John Daniel, author of the weighty tome, *Scarlet and the Beast: A History of the War Between English and French Freemasonry*, states that from the Hashishin "the Templars acquired the knowledge of manufacturing hashish and using it for their wounded in battle – eventually incorporating it's use into their pagan rituals" (Daniel, 1994/2007). Daniel also claims that "Drug use by … the Templars was carried into the degenerate lodges of both Freemasonries [French and English]" (Daniel, 1994/2007).

> As the Templars descended deeper into drugs and witchcraft they saw Jesus Christ as their enemy and began to hate the Catholic Church. Gradually they abandoned Catholicism, becoming worshippers of the Baphomet, a pagan symbol of Satan pictured as a goat head within an upside down star.… The Templars also adopted the Satanic symbol of the skull and crossbones, which symbol of death would follow them throughout their migrations.… Use of the skull and crossbones persisted in Freemasonry, where it became the symbol of the Master Mason until after World War II (Daniel, 1994/2007).

This theme of hashish-fuelled Templar and Masonic Satanic rituals, as we shall see in Chapter 21, reached its peak with the claims of the exposing of a sort of devil-worshipping drug-infused branch of Masonry, known as Palladianism, but is now remembered as being fabricated as part of the elaborate "Taxil Hoax."

Medieval Gnostics?

Gnostics have always been known for their secrecy, even during the first centuries A.D. In regard to the Gnostics, not likely to have been around in the 11th century, we do know of other situations where Gnostic sects did survive. Gnostic sects such as the Sabeans and Mandeans survived in the medieval Arabic world and even into modern times. Manichean gnostics were known to have survived into the early medieval period in China. Moreover, the Manichean use of cannabis seems to have been an issue for the indigenous traditional Chinese, through their "Incense Houses," for which the sect was eventually banned in China, and driven underground once again. In medieval China, the "general opinion of their religion was that it involved drug-induced ecstasy, for their leaders had titles like 'spirit-king' and 'spirit-father and 'spirit-mother,' but the common folk deliberately mispronounced the word for 'spirit' (mo) as 'ma,' meaning 'cannabis sativa' (as if 'Pater' were changed phonetically to 'pothead')" (Ruck et al. 2001).

> Their leader is called the King Demon (mo-wang) and his assistants are called Demon Fathers (mo-weng) and Demon Mothers (mo-mu). They all engage in luring people [to join the sect]. On the first and fifteenth of each month, each follower pays forty-nine cash pieces as incense money at the place of the Demon Father. The Demon Mother will then collect all the strings of cash and hands them over to the King Demon from time to time. The amount of money collected each year in this way is not inconsiderable...
>
> The word mo (demon) is mispronounced by the common people as ma ['hemp'] and hence their chiefs are called ma-huang (yellow hemp) or some other such term with which they substitute the appellation of mo-wang (Demon King). The followers are required to swear solemn oaths at the initiation (Lieu, 1985).[24]

There have also been believable assertions that a Gnostic revival was behind the Cathar heresies which thrived in Southern France between the 12th-14th centuries. "Medieval Catholic authors often declared Cathars to be the direct descendants of the Manicheans..." (Wickersham, 2012). However, no substantial historical evidence has been found to document this as a certainty, and it is still a matter of debate. Unfortunately, alongside the massacre of the Cathars, was the burning of their documents and likely the destruction of their religious iconography. However, it is clear they held strikingly similar dualistic beliefs about the nature of heaven and the material world, to that of earlier Gnosticism. Numerous authors have suggested that Cathars had infiltrated the Templars in the earliest stages of the order, and whole books have been written associating the Cathar heresies with the Grail mythos.

Concerns about secret Gnostics in medieval Europe begin appearing surprisingly early. In the first half of the 11th century, French monk and historian Adémar de Chabannes (989–1034) was writing about "Manichean" heretics who had a "special brew imbibed by the sectarians." Adémar, who is not remembered as a reliable source for history, and has even been deemed a forger, claimed the heresy was introduced to France by "a peasant who claimed that he could give them great strength and who carried with him dust from dead children which quickly make anyone who came into contact with it a Manichee."

> They worshiped the devil who appeared to them on one occasion in the guise of an Ethiopian and on another as an angel of light, and brought down money for them every day. In obedience to him they secretly rejected Christs, and in private committed sins and crimes which it would be sinful to even mention, while in public the pretended to be true Christian.[25]

Accusations of baby eating go back to cries made by pagan Rome against Christians, and then the Christians against Gnostics, later witches, and Templars, so should be taken with a grain of salt. Other references refer to a "heavenly food" ingested by Cathars, and these alongside Adémar's reference to a magic "dust" give strong indications of an entheogen of some sort being referred to, although in these cases, viewed through the prejudiced spectacles of a detractor out to demonize those who used such substances.

Catharism was said to have been passed around by a group of "weavers," and this in an area known for its hemp production. Catharism has even been called the "heresy of weavers." The names "Weavers and Cathars were at times synonymous" (Targuebayre, 1993). The religion grew in popularity until the 14th century when it was virtually exterminated in Southern France in a massacre of an estimated million people by the Catholic Church. Giving us the famous line from the 12th-13th century Cistercian abbot Arnaud Amalric, who responded when asked by a Crusader how to distinguish the Cathars from the Catholics during a massacre *Caedite eos. Novit enim Dominus qui sunt eius* "Kill them all. For the Lord knows who are His." Their concerns were intense, as the Catholic Church was apparently losing their hold over the local populace in droves. As St. Bernard of Clairvaux lamented "Women are leaving their husbands, men are putting aside their wives, and they all flock to those heretics! Clerics and priests, the youthful and the adult among them, are leaving their congregations and churches and are often found in the company of weavers of both sexes."[26]

Thus the idea that certain cannabis, and/or other entheogen-using Gnostic sects might have survived into the medieval period, cannot be strictly ruled out. Moreover, it could well be argued, and has been, that things like Alchemy, Kabbalah, Magic, are but extensions of Gnostic techniques and philosophies, and much of the occult tradition itself is influenced by Gnosticism.

The Herbarum Initiatus

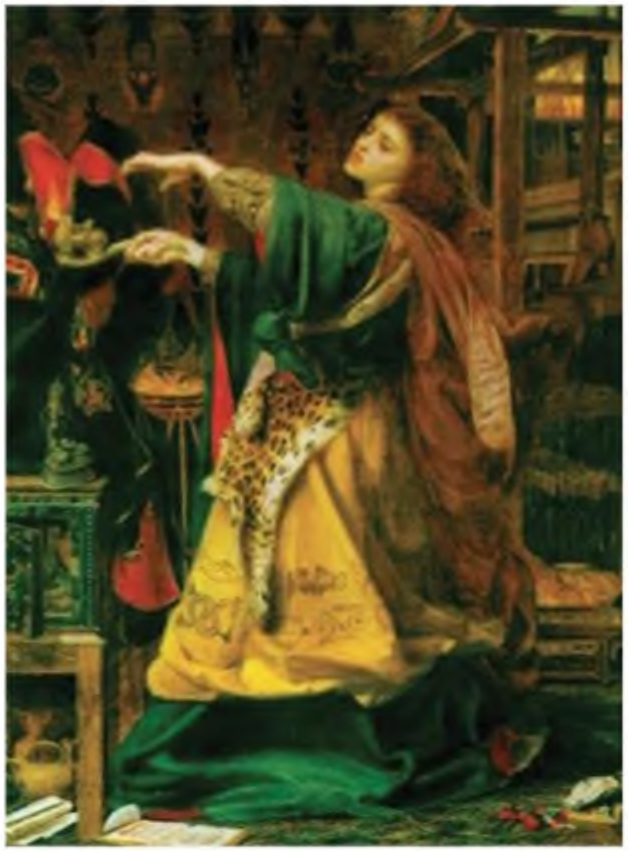
In relation to Adémar de Chabannes, and our discussion of the Grail, tinctures and magical elixirs etc., it is worth noting his 1030 A.D. account of a battle between two knights that was said to have taken place a couple of years prior, and the interesting reference to a potion consumed by one of the contenders. In personal correspondence with Tom Hatsis, he directed me to Adémar's account of a duel between *defensor maleficae Willelmus*, "William, the knight who defended the witch" and an opponent named Stephanus. In the account, Willelemus is hired to defend the honor of a woman, who had been accused of using magic to cause the illness of a nobleman. Unable to get a confession in court, the knight was hired as a "free lancer" to defend her innocence, which was a not uncommon way of settling such disputes at the time.

As Hatsis has translated and commented on the pertinent passages regarding the opting in question, "...On that same day that the man [William] defended the witch [*maleficia muliers*, "a woman skilled in magic"] he had already been enchanted beforehand [or bewitched – the word is '*incantatoribus*'] by drinking an herbal potion [*herbarum initiatus*] that initiated him [into her magical arts]. After the fight, William, defeated, vomited the potion. ... the witches, who had been chanting from a distance [i.e., safe from the fighting] ran away."[27] Stephanus won the fight without injury. It's notable that the elixir itself in the story receives little attention, and at this point seems of not much concern. As well it is not magic itself that the legal dispute was over, but the use of it to cause illness, as this story takes place at a time prior to the churches development of the witch stereotype, and the witch mania that grew out of it. However, the similarities to the potions and initiatory rites that have been associated with the grail mythology make this story very intriguing, and indicate that some elements of this archetypal imagery may have been a reality in Europe prior to the Templars sojourn in the Holy Land.

This medieval Grail-like imagery in association with "witches" and the *herbarum initiatus*, is also reminiscent of the stories of King Arthur's sister Morgan le Fay. Variations of the last part of her name have been associated with "fairy" and "magic powers." In a footnote to *Chretien de troyes Yvain ou le Chevalier au Lion*, the translator Phillipe Walter notes that: "...in the *Vita Merlini*, (Life of Merlin) attributed to Geoffroi de Monmouth (written circa 1150): 'Her name is Morgan and she Teach which are the usage of 'all' Plants to Heal the body of the ill' (verse 920-921)" (Walter, 2000).

> In this Work, Morgane heals her Brother Arthur who sojourned with her at Avalon after having been fatally wounded. Morgane knows the Virtue of The

Medicinal Plants and Herbs; She teaches them willingly to the Doctors and Healers; This explain, without a doubt, the adjective "sage" ("savant"/ "scientist-scholar") which is applied to her by Chrétien de Troyes (verse 2955) (Walter, 2000).



Morgan le Fay making herbal potions, as imagined in a mid 19th century painting by Frederick Sandys.

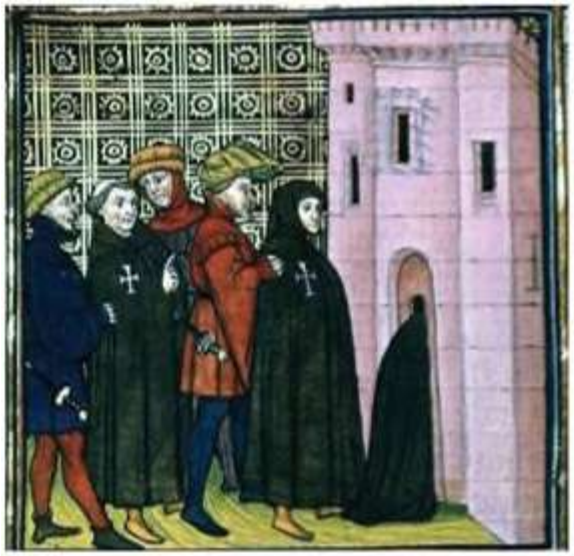
Actual Evidence

In regard to direct contemporary historical evidence indicating the Templar's use of cannabis, after extensive research, the closest I could come are the following references to " *canabi* " in Latin documents relating to the order, as well as their arrest, which do add to the intrigue.

Forty years before their arrest, at the peak of their prosperity and influence, in a declaration on the "Colonisation by Moorish Settlers at Villastar, (1267)" both Christian and Saracen (Arab Muslim) settlers are giving control of an area of land in Spain, with part of the deal being that payment to the Templars, includes one quarter of all "corn, wine, hemp [Latin, *canabi*], flax, gardens and vegetables and all other fruits both ripe and good that you gather from them ... in perpetuity" along with "first-fruits of everything you gather from said properties" (Barber & Bate, 2002). Unfortunately, there is no direct identification as to what the cannabis was to be used for, so it could be industrial, medicinal or food. However, Saracens are not known for growing industrial forms of cannabis, but have a long history of cultivating the resinous varieties, which are known to grow quite well in Spain, and as already noted, hash was said to have been both available and in use in Spain during this time period.

The Templars also declare "jurisdiction and Lordship over the saffron (?)" and each "house of the 30 Saracens settled there we shall have once a month for a labourer for the saffron(?)" (Barber & Bate, 2002). In this respect, it may be worth noting that in the Islamic world the name "Saffron" was used as slang for "an orange-colored slab of hashish, saffron, and spices" (Abel, 1980). It is unclear how long this slang use of saffron has been in use, although hashish and saffron have been used together since at least medieval Islamic times (Rosenthal, 1972). Also worth noting is that Rabbi Immanuel Löw referred to an ancient Jewish recipe (Sabb. 14. 3 ed. Urbach, 9th-11th century A.D.) that called for wine to be mixed with ground-up saffron, Arabic gum and *hasisat surur*, "I know 'surur' solely as a alias for the resin the *Cannabis sativa*" (Löw, 1924). And as noted in Chapter 2 there is reason to believe that *hasisat*, is a reference to hashish, and what is identified is a potent hashish oil. However, it should also be noted that saffron itself was a valued commodity, being one of the most expensive spices and it's use as a food, medicine, perfume, clothing dye and psychoactive properties have also been reported.

Cannabis was also confiscated at the arrest of the Templars. At the bequest of King Philip IV, and their properties were seized an inventory "of Templar property in Normandy (1307), included "hemp [*canabi*] estimated at approximately 100 *sous*," along with wine, bread, meat and other farm stuff. (Barber & Bate, 2002). The estimated worth of seized cannabis was placed at a value of about five pounds of silver.



Arrest of the Templars - "Chroniques de France ou de St Denis" - last quarter of XIV cent. [Royal 20 C VII f. 42v]

Arrests at Templar sites in France and elsewhere in October of 1307, were followed by simultaneous synchronized raids at Templar properties on the same day in the British Empire on January 8th, 1308, through top secret orders that had been delivered on Dec 15th of 1307. By royal decree, the following orders were given that after the "feast of the Epiphany (Jan. 10) early in the morning, the sheriff and his assistants are to take into custody all the Knights Templars.... All their lands and tenements, goods and chattels, are to be seized into the kings hands, together with all charters, writings, and muniments relating to the same, and an inventory made..."[28] Templar Lands in England, Wales, Ireland and Scotland were seized, and all knights and monks were arrested. A 1308 inventory of seized items from a Templar site in Britain included "3 stones of hemp [*canabi*]" on a list that included everything from tunics, to crossbows, to cups and plates, but no food items, or wines, (Lord, 2002). The stone or stone weight (abbreviation: st.) is an English and imperial unit of mass now equal to 14 pounds, so about 42 pounds of Hemp, [*canabi*] was taken.

Although neither of these raids identified the form of cannabis that was seized, one would think it was of the industrial sort, as in ropes, clothes or cloth, such would have been identified, as these sorts of items are included on the list. Could the cannabis have come from Templars in the Mid-East or Spain, where they had Saracens growing cannabis, saffron and other rare spices for them? This situation engenders a discussion of the nature of the charges labeled against the Knights, particularly regarding their alleged acts of heresy.

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[1] Libro del Tresoro, on the Philosopher Stone by Alphonso X.

[2] "Juan i Tresserras (pers. comm. 1998) claims to have identified charred Cannabis remains ... from an Arabian pipe recovered from the medieval Christian castle site of Cornellà de Llobregat, Barcelona and dated at ca. 900-700 BP [BP , i.e. before the present age, designated as 1950]. The methods used to identify the charred remains as Cannabis were not disclosed. These reports are

controversial, as both these dates precede the exploration of the New World by Spain and the supposed first date of introduction (ca. 400 BP) of tobacco, pipes and smoking from the New World into Europe" (Clarke & Fleming, 1998).

[3] Such as Philip of Milly (1120 –1171), aka Philip of Nablus, a baron of Jerusalem and the seventh Grand Master of the Knights Templar.

[4] First published in French in 1813.

[5] As translated in (Twyman, 2017).

[6] http://www.templiers.org/assassins.php, 2016.

[7] As quoted in (von Hammer-Purgstall, 1835.

[8] McCarthy, 1889.

[9] Translation from (Gulchin, 1817)

[10] Translation in (Pourafzal & Montgomery, 2004)

[11] Seyyid a honorary term used to designate the descendants of Mohamed. As discussed in Chapter 3 and indicated in the Dabistan, there seems to have been some tradition of a belief regarding the use of cannabis by Muhamad's clan.

[12] Seese thou this little berry, this green pill?
It is made of dreams; yet, so sustaining it,
Thirty fat birds all cooking on a spit
Would not thy belly half so subtly fill.
It is this berry the Sufis eat
When they would fall into an ecstasy,
And tell their precious lies to you and me,
A little hasheesh is the whole big cheat.
Thirty birds, said I? Yea! In one small grain
A hundred times that number cook for thee;
Eat thou – it will harm thee not – and thine shall be
Houris outnumbered ere thou wakest again.

– Hafiz, Translation from (Smith, 2003).

[13] Translation from (Bicknell, 1875).

[14] Translation by (Shahriari, 1999)

[15] Di Cicco also made this claim in a 2008 article, "Medicine of the Templars."

[16] See also, (Breverton, 2013); (Lawless & Allan, 2014)

[17] Unfortunately the majority of Avicenna's Canon of Medicine has not been translated into English, and only parts of it into Latin. As well, most of Avicenna's Canon was composed in older, classical Arabic, and few are able to read or understand this in modern times.

[18] From a quote in (Legman, 1966).

[19] From a translation in Twyman, 2017).

[20] As translated in (Twyman, 2017).

[21] As translated in (Twyman, 2017).

[22] As translated in (Twyman, 2017).

[23] From the French (Levi, 1856)

[24] The use of incense in medieval China seems to have had strong association with sorcery. In reference to taoist cults who had been influenced by the Manicheans, Samuel Lieu, refers to a medieval Chinese decree on the "Prohibition of Sorcery and Black Arts":"...Sorcerers who pretend to call down false divinities, write charms, cast spells over water, 'support the phoenix [i.e. perform planchette writings], invoke the Sages, calling themselves the 'Upright Master,' ' Grand Guardian' or 'Mistress,' or claim to be members of the Maitreya sect, or the White Lotus sect... etc., which indulge in heterodox practices ... and in distorting the truth ... together with those who conceal prints and images of their deities and congregate to burn incense to them and those who meet at night and disperse by dawn.... Their leaders shall be strangulated and their followers shall receive a hundred strokes of the heavy baton and be exiled..." (Lieu, 1985) I am unclear of what was in such incenses, but the use of cannabis in Taoist magical practices goes back to ancient times. Expert on Chinese history, Joseph Needham, also reports that Taoists mystics were alleged to add "hallucinogenic smokes to their incense burners.... The addition of hemp (ta-ma, huo-ma, Cannabis sativa = indica) to the contents of incense-burners is clearly stated in one Taoist collection, Wu Shang Pi Yao (Essentials of the Matchless Books), which must place it before +570..." (Needham, 1974). It has been suggested that Taoist alchemical sexual techniques may have been borrowed from Manichean sources as well.

[25] As quoted in (Moore, 2012).

[26] Wakefield & Evans, 1991.

[27] Translated from the Latin in (Bouquet & Delisle, 1874)

[28] Original documents relating to the Knights Templars: in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, Volume 204, (1858).